

DEEP ROOTS AND FIRM FOUNDATIONS



St Paul's

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
CHRISTCHURCH • NEW ZEALAND

1864-1964



With many thanks for those  
lengthy telephone conversations,  
Phoebe Baurnt.

# Deep Roots and Firm Foundations

*Ephesians 3 - 17 N.E.B.*



*A History of*  
**ST PAUL'S**  
**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH**  
**1864 - 1964**

*Compiled on the  
occasion of the centenary*

*by* PHOEBE BRUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

1964



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## FOREWORD

*It could be a significant omen that at this important stage in the history of St Paul's, the parish is vacant, and an interim-moderator has the unusual honour of writing a foreword to the history.*

*It is an important stage because one hundred years has been completed, years which have been full of service gladly given to the advancement of the Church in Christchurch and beyond. As you read Miss Brunt's history, I am sure you, too, will have a picture of these people who were our forbears in the faith. They were men and women with the courage of real conviction who were prepared to go new ways where conscience led them. And I am sure they were more ready to branch out into new ideas than we believe of them. This is the past—a really significant page in the life of the Church in this young land.*

*Is the glory to be all in the past? This is to me the significance of the moment when the parish looks forward to a new ministry in a new century. It is already thinking of new and different ways of bringing the gospel of God's redeeming love to the people of the inner city. This will not be an easy ministry, but if the people of churches like St Paul's do not do this work, it will remain undone and people will go by in the busy city without hearing the gospel. We shall be to blame in God's sight. As part of the reformed Church it is our boast that the Church is always being re-formed to meet the situations of new days. Let us see that this is not just an idle boast.*

*Above all let us pray that the guidance of God's spirit may lead the Church from this moment and into the next 100 years to write another page perhaps of a different sort but in the same great story. The tree has grown to maturity and is in its full flowering. Pray God its leaves may be used for the healing of the nations.*

*God bless this Church in the years ahead.*

*Yours sincerely,*

DAVID STEEDMAN.



## THE MINISTERS OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH.

THE REV GEORGE GRANT	.....	.....	.....	1864-1868
THE REV A. F. DOUGLAS	.....	.....	.....	1871-1875
THE REV J. ELMSLIE, M.A., D.D.	.....	.....	.....	1876-1903
THE REV THOS. TAIT, M.A., B.D.	.....	.....	.....	1903-1914
THE REV JOHN PATERSON, M.A.	.....	.....	.....	1914-1924
THE REV W. BOWER BLACK, LL.B.	.....	.....	.....	1924-1931
THE VERY REV ALAN C. WATSON, M.A., D.D.	.....	.....	.....	1932-1941
THE VERY REV STUART C. FRANCIS, B.A.	.....	.....	.....	1943-1963

## THE SESSION CLERKS OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH.

W. GAVIN, October, 1864, to 1878.

J. GIBB, April, 1878, to September, 1887.

W. GAVIN, September, 1887, to July, 1908.

J. F. SMELLIE, July, 1908, to September, 1911.

E. MACRAE, September, 1911, to June, 1913.

D. C. BURNS, June, 1913, to February, 1917.

G. BURN, February, 1917, to October, 1927.

D. C. BURNS, October, 1927, to June, 1944.

S. E. MCGREGOR, June, 1944-



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PHOEBE BRUNT.



1

THE FIRST  
FIFTY YEARS



I

THE FIRST  
FIFTY YEARS





ST PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH,  
WHICH WAS OPENED ON OCTOBER 28, 1877.





Mr John Anderson, one of the first Presbyterians to land in Canterbury, a founder and leader of the congregation.



The Town Hall, High Street, in which the congregation worshipped for its first three years.



## THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

*"A tree planted by water,  
that sends out its roots by the stream,  
and does not fear when heat comes  
for its leaves remain green  
and is not anxious in the year of drought,  
for it does not cease to bear fruit." Jer. 17: 8.*

*"It was beautiful in its greatness,  
in the length of its branches;  
for its roots went down  
to abundant waters." Ezek. 31: 7.*

On November 30, 1863, a meeting convened by circular to "a few of the Presbyterians most strongly interested in the welfare of the Presbyterian Church in this Province" was held in the offices of J. Drummond Macpherson, Esq., "to consider the advisability of offering a call to the Rev. George Grant, of Akaroa, requesting him to form and to take charge of a second Presbyterian Church in Christchurch."

At this meeting, a committee was formed to take preliminary steps to call a general meeting of the Presbyterians of Christchurch and its vicinity and to frame resolutions for submission to the meeting. Accordingly this advertisement was inserted in the Lyttelton Times on December 31, 1863.

### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CANTERBURY

A meeting of those favourable to the establishment of a second Presbyterian Church in Christchurch will be held in the warehouse of Mr Robert Symington, Cathedral Square, on Monday, the 4th January, at seven o'clock.

William Wilson  
Drummond Macpherson  
John Anderson

John Anderson occupied the chair at this meeting. A committee of sixteen was formed for the purpose of transmitting the Call or Invitation, to collect subscriptions for the Maintenance Fund and other duties. The Call was presented to the Presbytery of Canterbury on January 25, 1864.

"We, the undersigned, taking upon us the solemn responsibility of establishing a second Presbyterian Church in Christchurch, and having marked with great satisfaction the earnestness and diligence with which you have discharged the various duties connected with your present congregation;—present you this Call or Invitation to undertake the duties of our Pastor, and we would respectfully urge upon you its acceptance:—



as from the great and increasing population of Christchurch, a wider sphere of usefulness is opened up to you for the advancement of the Redeemer's Cause and Kingdom." (The population in 1863 was 6431.) Forty-six gentlemen signed the Call. Sixteen guaranteed the first year's stipend—£350, the minister providing house, horse and gig—if the Call were sustained by Presbytery.

Mr Grant, whom the Presbyterian settlers from Pigeon Bay, Duvauchelle Bay and Akaroa had combined to bring from Scotland, had arrived only in 1862. A church had been built and opened ready for his coming. He was a faithful pastor and an acceptable preacher and had made many warm friends. In the meantime, Ebenezer Hay and other leading members of the congregation were in touch with John Anderson and a group of Presbyterians in Christchurch. They were aware that a crisis had arisen in the congregation there and that the only solution was to form two charges. Therefore, when the Presbytery sustained the Call to Mr Grant, the Akaroa congregation released him to form a second charge in Christchurch. It was ten years before a second minister was appointed to the Peninsula.

## THE ROOT STOCK

In considering events which occurred in Canterbury, New Zealand, in 1864, it is important to look at a historic event which took place in Scotland in 1843.

Implicit in Scottish Presbyterianism is the people's democratic right to call their own minister. Patronage by which a patron or the Crown could present to a congregation a minister without its sanction or election was abolished by the Scottish Parliament in 1690, but the British Parliament of 1712 restored the system of Church Patronage to the Scottish National Church.

Not all Presbyterians were antagonistic; many believed that Patronage secured for congregations better qualified, more cultured, more liberally-minded men. The controversy continued for more than a century until, in 1834, the Assembly passed the Veto Act which allowed congregations to veto the presentation by the patron of any minister judged unsuitable on grounds of doctrine or character. This Act, however, was declared invalid by the House of Lords on appeal, as infringing the rights of patrons as defined by the Act of 1712.

A crisis was reached on May 18, 1843, when after an all-day debate behind locked doors, four hundred ministers led by the Moderator, Dr Thomas Chalmers, filed out of the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, to an adjoining hall to constitute the Free Church of Scotland, in which the tradition of democratic election and government would be maintained. It was eighty-six years before the breach caused by the Disruption was healed.

Elder, in the "History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand", says that "One result of the cleavage made for good. The spirit that led to



the great act of renunciation endured to inspire organised liberality on a scale hitherto unknown in Scotland, for the building of churches and the support of a ministry now wholly dependent on the generosity of the people."

John Anderson, the foremost of the founders of St Paul's, was 23 when the Disruption took place. It is likely that most of the early Presbyterian settlers were men of the Disruption. As men who had had part in a great cause, those from the Free Church were independent, stern, pietistic and strongly evangelical. Settlers from the Established Church, on the other hand, were equally independent and sincere, but tended to be more tolerant, liberal in outlook, perhaps even worldly—from a Free Church point of view. It is important to keep these differences of temperament, character and outlook in mind when considering the events in St Andrew's which led to the formation of St Paul's.

## TRANSPLANTINGS

In October, 1853, the ship "John Taylor" called at Lyttelton, to discharge cargo and passengers. On board were the Rev John Moir, his wife and six children. Mr Moir was on his way to begin a second charge in Wellington. On the second Sunday of his stay, he conducted the first Presbyterian service in Christchurch, in the carpenter's workshop of James Johnston, in Cashel Street. A plaque on the doorway of Johnson and Couzins commemorates this service.

This service aroused in the Scottish settlers a desire to secure a minister and organise a congregation. A public meeting was held at the Royal Hotel on January 31, 1854, when it was resolved that a Scots Church be established. A strong committee was appointed to "collect subscriptions, to select an acre of town land for a site, to procure a suitable design for a building, to ascertain the best means of obtaining a minister, and to call a public meeting to report results." Two members of the Committee were—William Wilson, Secretary, and John Anderson.

In July, 1854, William Wilson wrote to Dr John Bonar, Convener of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. His letter concludes, "It has been the repeated and strongly expressed desire of almost every Presbyterian in the settlement that none but a really clever minister should be sent—one who is not only fluent in speech and a good extempore preacher, but capable, if it should seem desirable, of giving an occasional week-evening lecture on astronomy, geology, natural history, or other secular subject of popular, and instructive interest."

The man chosen by Dr Bonar to fulfil these exacting requirements was the Rev Charles Fraser, M.A.—young, recently married, "of superior talents, of good manners and of scientific attainments." Mr Fraser arrived on Saturday, April 13, 1856. The next morning he preached his first sermon



in the Wesleyan Chapel, Lyttelton. For over ten months the Wesleyans gave the Scottish community the use of their Christchurch and Lyttelton chapels. Finally, St Andrew's Church was opened on Sunday, February 1, 1857.

Mr Fraser, as "first minister of the Presbyterian Church in the Province," threw himself with missionary zest into Church Extension, paying visits to North and South Canterbury, and the West Coast. He conducted his first service in Akaroa in 1857, preaching in the morning to the English and Scottish settlers, and in the evening to the French, in French. He visited Akaroa by boat for five years, until, as has been recorded, the settlers on the Peninsula combined to bring the Rev George Grant from Scotland in 1862.

Three reasons for the growing division in St Andrew's may be given. One was that Mr Fraser was not a total abstainer and did not support total abstinence. "In 1861, the 15,000 Canterbury settlers maintained half-a-dozen breweries, besides importing over three gallons of spirits, seven of beer and nearly two gallons of wine per person annually. Temperance was the strongest moral—almost religious—movement of the century," (a 'History of New Zealand'—Sinclair). At the General Assembly of 1874, it was reported that in some districts there was one public-house to every sixty inhabitants and that the average was one to 260.

Another reason was Mr Fraser's pulpit preaching with its scientific and philosophical outlook. As an instance, in February, 1872, he gave an address at Timaru in aid of the Presbyterian Sunday schools. The subject was "Darwinianism." "The lecture was excellently delivered and handled with that tact and delicacy which the subject requires when treated before an audience of both sexes" (The Lyttelton Times). This lecture was repeated in St Andrew's and later published in the "Canterbury Presbyterian." His treatment of his subject was on the whole favourable, but this did not make him any more popular with the average Free Church member of the time.

The last reason was the clashing of strong personalities. Mr Fraser had a powerful and perhaps overbearing personality. There was dissension within the congregation and its Courts. William Wilson, Secretary of the Deacons' Court, and John Anderson, Treasurer, resigned. Others of like mind and temper joining with them, the move to form a second congregation was begun.

Supporters, meeting in the Town Hall on 13th April, resolved "to secure the use of the Town Hall until a church shall have been erected." Seat rents would not be levied in the meantime. The Town Hall, described as the "handsomest wooden building on the plains" was on the west side of the Sumner Road, between Cashel and Lichfield Streets—McKenzies N.Z. Ltd. occupy approximately the same site now in High Street. Its main hall was some 66ft by 22ft, and it had a gallery. In September, 1864, the new Town Hall, built of stone, 81ft by 34ft, and 33ft high, was opened, the old Town Hall being used as a supper-room.

A Committee was appointed to secure a piece of land for a Church



and to report to the congregation before purchase. Mr Thomas Anderson kindly offered to act as Church Officer for the opening, and Mr Duncan, kindly offering to conduct the Psalmody, was appointed interim Precentor. Those present undertook to contribute a portion of their subscriptions at an early date.

## THE SAPLING

### THE MINISTRY OF THE REV GEORGE GRANT

Mr Grant was inducted in the Town Hall on April 20, 1864, the occasion being "solemnised by the Rev William Hogg, who delivered a discourse giving an exposition of 'the Presbyterian Doctrine and System of Ecclesiastical Government.'"

The following Sunday, the Rev Charles Fraser preached a very excellent sermon which ended with the introduction of the Rev George Grant to the congregation. The body of the hall was entirely filled with a very attentive congregation. In the evening both hall and gallery were completely filled by an audience of from three to four hundred persons who listened with the deepest attention to an eloquent and impressive sermon. The collections for the day amounted to £6. "Public worship will be held at half past ten o'clock and at 6 o'clock until a new church shall have been erected." (The Lyttelton Times).

The Committee appointed on 4th January, with Mr Grant as Chairman, continued to supervise the business of the congregation. Mr Symington's offer of his warehouse for the Thursday evening prayer-meeting was accepted; Mr Thos. Anderson was authorised to get four candle-sticks and some candles for prayer meeting purposes. A Sunday school was started with 45 scholars. A satisfactory agreement was made with Mr Oswald, the town lamplighter, to light the Town Hall during evening services at 6s each time. A class was formed for the improvement of the Psalmody. Mr Clark was appointed Precentor at a salary of £20, per annum.

The name of St Paul's, was chosen for the church. Arrangements were made for the forthcoming Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, 1000 tokens being ordered from England. Three hundred paper tokens were printed locally for present use. Admission to the Sacrament was by token only; this could be withheld for faults in character or doctrine. (A framed collection of these small pieces of metal is hanging in the Church vestibule). One hundred and fifty schedules, nomination and voting papers for the election of elders and deacons, were also printed.

The Sacrament was first celebrated in October, 1864. "Religious exercises will be dispensed at 3 p.m., on the Thursday and Saturday previous to the Sacrament." These were fast days. A Thanksgiving service was held on the Monday after the Sacrament. The Rev William Hogg and four



elders (ordained previously in Scotland or St Andrew's), assisted Mr Grant in the admission of communicants and the dispensation of the Sacrament. White linen cloths were spread along the backs of seats and the common cup or chalice was passed from hand to hand. Fermented wine was used. In these early years, the Sacrament was celebrated twice yearly.

In January, 1865, by authority of the Presbytery of Canterbury, nomination and voting papers were issued to the congregation for the election of elders and deacons, and collected on appointed Sundays. Five elders and five deacons were elected.

The first meeting of St Paul's Session was on January, 11, 1865. An unusual exercise of authority was the use of the Rite of Absolution which was administered in cases of serious moral lapse when offenders showed that they were genuinely repentant. In some cases on record the sin was self-confessed, that is, the Session had been quite unaware of it. About 1870, Mr Robert Sutherland presented to the congregation a silver Communion Service. This must be the service still in use, for there is no record of any other service being bought or given.

The first Deacons' Court was constituted on February 8, 1865. Under "voluntaryism" the principal sources of income in the Presbyterian Church were seat levies, and the Maintenance or Sustentation Fund. Levies having been deferred, the Court's first business was to divide the "city" into four by the intersection of Colombo and Worcester Streets, naming the districts which stretched from Heathcote to Halswell—N.E., N.W., S.E., S.W. Two elders or deacons with books containing names and addresses of members and adherents were appointed to each district to collect quarterly subscriptions to the Maintenance Fund.

By this time the City Council had formed and metalled and lined with footpaths five miles of streets. These were within an area bounded by Manchester Street on the east, Oxford Terrace on the west, the Market Square (Victoria Square) on the north and Cashel Street on the south, as well as the Sumner Road (High Street) as far as its junction with Madras Street. Within this area there were 17 lamps, some kerosene, some gas. It is hard to imagine how any kind of church life was maintained in winter in such conditions. John Miln, an elder, returning to Halswell after an evening service, was bogged in Lincoln Road. Unable to dig himself out, he spent the night in his bullock dray. Thus distance was not the only difficulty faced by elders and deacons when collecting in their respective districts.

Sabbath day collections were not general in the Presbytery. They were taken in St Paul's, however, after each service by two deacons at the door. Frequently they were announced as "special," that is, for Presbytery and Assembly expenses, the Foreign and Maori Mission, Ministers', Widows' and Orphans' Fund, the Sunday school, or the Ladies' Benevolent Committee, (the first recorded women's organisation which worked for the poor of the congregation). At first the entire collection was given to the stated object, but as finance became difficult the average Sunday collection was taken out and the balance only, remitted to purposes outside the congregation.



Subscription lists, tea-meetings (or soirées) and bazaars provided the Deacons' Court with additional income for any special project.

A quarter acre section at the corner of Manchester and Lichfield Street, where the Majestic Theatre now stands, was the first site chosen for the Church, but the price, £800, was considered exorbitant. In October, 1866, a quarter acre section fronting on Lichfield Street, marked No. 929, on the plan of Christchurch, was offered to the Deacons' Court, and accepted, "for the price of £150, in consideration of the ground being intended for a Church." Subscription lists were opened, and the financial assistance of the ladies of the Bazaar Committee sought.

A two day bazaar was held. On sale were "the usual heterogeneous articles—lucky bags, raffles, things ornamental, things useful and useless, well executed water-colours, specimens of ornamental leather-work, slippers and pillows. Pleasant reminiscences of the Old Land were a lark in a cage and some pots containing cowslips. The Volunteer Band stationed in the gallery contributed not a little to the enjoyment of the occasion." The sum of £512 was added to the Building Fund. For their effort, the ladies were permitted to nominate two members (male) as Trustees.

With the above sum, £276 in subscriptions and £24 in collections from the opening services, the church was opened on the 19th May, 1867, with a debt of only £133. The church, "of no very great pretensions," seating 350, held the first harmonium to be installed in a Presbyterian Church in New Zealand. Prior to this, the Precentor had led the people's singing with a tuning fork.

In spite of bad weather, 250 sat down to tea at the soirée on the following Thursday. Several ministers and other gentlemen had been advertised to give addresses. This programme was lightened "by several anthems beautifully executed by the choir led by Mr Clark and accompanied by Mrs Long on the new harmonium. Mr Grant reminded his people, "It must not be forgotten that there is another Church to be erected—namely, a spiritual one, of which the great builder is our Redeemer."

At following meetings of the Deacons' Court (or Financial Committee), 119 sittings were reported taken at the uniform rate of 10s per sitting. The practice of seat-letting established the family pew with father and mother at either end and the children ranged in between. But it was not a wholly good system. Strangers coming to St Paul's still ask if they may sit anywhere. It was discontinued in St Paul's in 1949. Brackets which had held the names of pew holders are still on the pews.

The two candles at the minister's platform being rather deficient, they were replaced with two kerosene lamps on brackets. Mr Tracy was engaged to light up the church when necessary on Sabbath nights and to clean all lamps at 2s 6d per week. It was resolved to employ ladies to collect the Maintenance Fund, it being well-nigh impossible for elders and deacons to cover districts adequately, with long working hours and a six-day week.

Consent to the initiation of a Sustentation Fund for Ministers of the



Presbytery was withheld on the ground that "no congregation was more than properly self-supporting, some being considerably below this mark." After the boom of 1861-1864, (a side-effect of the building of the Lyttelton tunnel) the Province was in the grip of depression. St Paul's liabilities were some £200, most of it being arrears of stipend which, since 1865, had not been fully met.

The Peninsula congregation had built and opened its church before Mr Grant arrived. Few, if any, parishes had shown the same foresight. One country minister had been paid only £130-£160 p.a. for four years, although his parish had built five places of worship and was then building a manse. The general position was such, that in January, 1869, Presbytery stated that it would instruct the Colonial Committee of the Free Church to accept no application for a minister without a firm guarantee of a fixed income, nor would the Presbytery support any group which made application without such guarantee.

In March, 1868, Mr Grant agreed to accept a lower stipend in view of the continued monetary depression in the Province, but he said he would like to know what fixed sum he might expect. He added, "As regards visiting it was a matter which rested between God and his conscience and he thought he had done his duty. But if they would state how many times in a year they expected him to visit their families he would try how far he could comply with it." The stipend was fixed at £250 for the next six months, any excess raised to be used to pay off arrears.

In the following months, however, it was obvious that this amount was beyond the means of the congregation, which had fallen in numbers. At a general meeting in October, it was resolved to ask Mr Grant to retire "as it is evident that his ministrations are not received with that cordiality of feeling nor productive of that unity of action so essential for the furthering of the best interests of Presbyterianism amongst the members and adherents of St Paul's." Mr Grant resigned in December, 1868, the Session also resigning, for no recorded reason. By considerable effort £200 in stipend arrears were subscribed by April, 1869.

Many years later when these tensions were forgotten, Mr Grant was remembered as an accomplished scholar and a simple and pious man who stamped St Paul's with an evangelical tradition that it has never lost; but his quiet reserved disposition and somewhat delicate health had been better suited to a country parish than to the demands of a raw, growing town in a pioneer settlement.

In August, 1868, the Presbyterians of Banks Peninsula amongst whom Mr Grant had warm friends, and who still felt aggrieved at the "appropriation" of their minister, called him to resume their pastorate. It was presented to Presbytery in January 1869 but Mr Grant decided to return to Scotland. In May, with his wife and four children he embarked at Lyttelton on the ship Matoaka which was never heard of again. It was presumed that she had collided with an iceberg and foundered.



## THE MINISTRY OF THE REV A. F. DOUGLAS

In January, 1869, Presbytery appointed the Rev Richard Powell of the Welsh Calvinist Methodist Church, to supply the pulpit of St Paul's, temporarily. The Rev J. McIntosh was made Moderator and four assessors were appointed to form an interim session. In July, Mr Powell was appointed for a further six months.

The Financial Committee cleaned and fenced the grounds, and installed gas in the Church, the cost £60 4s 6d being met by proceeds from the Anniversary tea-meeting (£39 12s 3d) and a special collection (£23 5s 5d). Mr Robert Fulton was appointed the first Beadle at £20 per annum.

The first appeal to be made in St Paul's "for the better carrying out of the monetary affairs of this church," was made in July. "The committee begs to ask the members and adherents to give quarterly a fixed amount according to their several abilities, which amount the collectors will call for at stated intervals." The city and suburbs were divided into eight districts with lady collectors in each district.

In October, the congregation elected a new Session, and in January, 1870, it met to decide the question of the pastorate; the majority wished to call Mr Powell; the minority, a minister from Scotland. It is not altogether clear, but this was probably the Liberal Auld Kirk group which could not accept permanently the doctrines of Welsh Calvinist Methodism. This group protested to Presbytery which did not support the call to Mr Powell.

In March, a Call, guaranteeing a stipend of £350 per annum for two years, with 27 signatures, was forwarded to the Free Church Colonial Committee. Commissioners in Scotland were appointed to represent the Presbytery and congregation.

On January 12, 1871, the congregation met to hear all matters pertaining to the appointment of the Rev A. F. Douglas, of Alnwick, Northumberland, "a man of high character, theological attainments, an able author and reviewer." The Session reported, "It is with much gladness of heart and thankfulness to God that your office-bearers have witnessed the kindly good-feeling and brotherly love which prevails throughout the congregation amongst both members and adherents." In October, 1868, there had been 57 communicants, in October, 1870—86, of whom 16 joined for the first time. There were 148 Sunday school scholars, 20 teachers (10 male, 10 female), who met weekly for preparation, monthly for business. Liabilities were £200—(to meet these, £95 was subscribed during the meeting and within a month with other subscriptions, seat levies and collections, there was a credit balance).

The Session, "which in the absence of regular ministrations had gone on holding services (and the weekly prayer meeting) with very satisfactory results," had contributed to this improvement in atmosphere and outlook; but the men held "in most respect and esteem for what they had done for this church" were the Rev J. Ferguson and the Rev W. McGowan who as



well as helping with supply, had each visited every home connected with the congregation.

Mr Douglas was inducted on February 22, 1871. He at once initiated a congregational library which as well as books, contained the latest periodicals and magazines. He also established the Ladies' Tract Society and this Society by 1874 could report: 2000 copies of each tract printed monthly, 16 town distributors, several new districts and 40 packages posted monthly. Mr Douglas wrote the tracts.

Mr Douglas had made church extension a special study, and in June 1871, committees from St Paul's and St Andrew's met with members of Presbytery to form the Presbyterian Church Extension Association. Its aim was to foster Presbyterianism throughout the Province, to assist poor or struggling congregations to maintain a gospel ministry, to maintain one or more missionary preachers, and to assist theological students to prosecute their studies for the ministry.

This was a crucial event in the development of St Paul's. Mr Douglas believed that no congregation could really prosper which lived only to itself. In response to his appeals, many St Paul's members joined the Association which met monthly. The subscription was £1 per annum. In addition, sums up to £100 were raised each year by canvass of the congregation.

The lay element was the backbone of this Association. Hard-headed, practical business men managed it wisely and gave liberally. An arrangement was made with the Free Church Colonial Committee to act for it, in choosing and sending out men to whom it guaranteed £200 per year "it being not reasonable in itself to ask men to come out here from Home without any promise of their daily bread—and degrading to them and injurious to the cause to tell them when they first came that they must go to a people who had not been organised into a congregation nor taught to gather together their free-will offerings for the support of the ministry."

In December, 1873, at the tea-meeting preceding the Annual Meeting of the Church Extension Society "large as was the extent of the accommodation, the space was inadequate to the numbers who were to sit down, but by taking turns all were at length served." When the meeting began, the body of the hall and the gallery were well packed. Mr John Anderson, President, took the chair and the united choirs of St Paul's and St Andrew's sang at intervals during the evening.

Five new churches had been built, and by the end of the year ministers would be settled at Banks Peninsula, Lincoln and Ashburton. In addition, the Association assumed over-sight of Balcairn, Leithfield, Amberley and the Waikari Flat.

Mr Douglas's motion, "That inasmuch as the spiritual destitution of Presbyterians of the Province is very great, this meeting of Presbyterians pledges itself to support the Committee of the Association during the year," was carried enthusiastically.

An economic boom (1871-1878) had followed the 1865-1870 depression. The Sunday school for its annual picnic was taken by train to Rangiora or Dunsandel for a few pence per child, instead of to some paddock in



coach and carriages lent by members. A special collection was made to buy the school new Bibles as a complaint had been made to the Superintendent, that children were removing books from the pews and the congregation was greatly inconvenienced. A Notice-board was erected at the gate. Mrs Long's salary, £20 p.a., which had been paid by private subscription was made a charge on ordinary church funds, "as the harmonium is found to be of great assistance to the psalmody." Mr Clark's salary was raised to £30 per annum to enable the Session to secure his services for week-days when required as his non-attendance at mid-week services to lead the singing had caused considerable inconvenience. One dozen hymn books were bought for the use of strangers; each member of the congregation provided his own.

The first elders' districts were formed in 1872. Two elders were appointed to each, to visit members and adherents before Communion and to take turn as paired in standing at the church door on the Sabbath. The Sacrament was celebrated quarterly, in January, April, July and October. Instead of the single cup, the four cups of the Communion Service were used. Preparatory services had been discontinued after Mr Grant's departure. The Session now met before the morning service on the previous Sunday to receive first communicants and to examine the certificates (in effect, character and doctrine) of those joining by transfer. Strict discipline was exercised still, members being denied or suspended from their Christian privileges or absolved according to the degree of penitence or resolution shown. Tokens were issued to intending communicants after the morning service.

In September, 1872, the quarter-acre section facing Cashel Street at the rear of the church, was bought for £175. By 1873, the church was over-crowded, and in August, the congregation authorised the purchase of the section at the corner of Madras and Cashel Streets for £800, and the erection of a new church. Six competitive designs were received, the successful architect, Mr S. C. Farr, receiving £30 in addition to being appointed architect to the building. Constructed of blue rubble stone with white stone dressings, its style pointed Gothic of the 17th century, on paper it had unquestionably a very handsome appearance. The seating capacity was 700.

At its Annual Meeting on February 20, 1874, the congregation accepted the design, the total cost (including the site) not to exceed £4500. Tenders, however, ranged from £7500-£8000, and the committee deferred action on the new church, "in the certainty that a reduction in the cost of building would take place ere long." As a temporary measure extensions were made to the present church by lean-to-bays, giving some 80 more seats at a small cost.

A "notable feature" in connection with the Annual Meeting in 1875 was the fact that the tea preceding it was served on crockery with the words 'St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Christchurch, New Zealand' on each article, the set having been obtained in England by Mr A. Duncan and presented to the church. Pieces of this set are still in use. Reports showed that there were 200 Sunday school scholars—12 male teachers and 9 female. The infants' class, now separated from the main school, was over-crowding the



vestry. "The practice very common with some people of taking their children out for an afternoon's walk instead of sending them to Sunday school is very much to be regretted," reported the Superintendent.

There had been an increase in giving, but subscriptions to the Maintenance Fund still did not equal the minister's stipend. Owing to wet weather, the nett profit from the recent bazaar—£635, had been lower than expected, but £1000 was hoped for when goods on hand were sold. The practice of members of the committee nominating their successors was attacked by speakers as denying the congregation the right of nomination. It was agreed that henceforth all elections be conducted in conformity to the acts of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

At this point, Mr Douglas suggested that in view of the rapidly increasing work of the church, an assistant minister should be obtained, for which purpose he was willing to surrender half of his annual income. He made this offer because the congregation which was pledged to build a new church, could not undertake at present the additional burden of another stipend.

Three months later, Mr Douglas wrote to the Session that it must resign or he would, because of "differences having arisen such that he could no longer work comfortably with them. He would admit of no discussion in the matter." The Session did not resign so Mr Douglas did on July 25. The parties were called to the bar of Presbytery.

Commissioners (5) from the congregation said that the matter was a great calamity, owing to the lack of a right spirit in their midst; that the minister had been supported by a minority only in the Session which on several occasions had forced resolutions which in his judgment had been inopportune.

A case in point concerned the organisers of the recent bazaar who had obtained a licence to sell intoxicating liquors. The Session had carried a motion of censure (for—3, against—2, of which Mr Douglas was one; two declined to vote) to which Mr Douglas had also entered his dissent, saying that it was neither expedient nor necessary. A second motion that a copy be sent to the secretary of the bazaar committee lapsed.

Temperance versus Abstinence was not a peculiarly St Paul's issue. When the General Assembly met in Christchurch in December, 1875, the Temperance Committee moved "That the clergymen of the Church be enjoined to direct the attention of congregations to the subject of Intemperance on the second Sunday of March, 1876." At the same Assembly, the New Zealand Presbyterian Church Abstinence Society was formed with officers and committee drawn from Whangarei to Timaru; St Paul's Session Clerk was one Vice-President. It was said at this meeting that three-quarters of the ministers of Otago were abstainers.

Commissioners (2) from the Session said that it was not conscious of fault and denied that there had been organised opposition to Mr Douglas. With great reluctance, the Presbytery accepted Mr Douglas's resignation and appointed the Rev Charles Fraser as Interim Moderator.





The Rev George Grant,  
1864-1868.



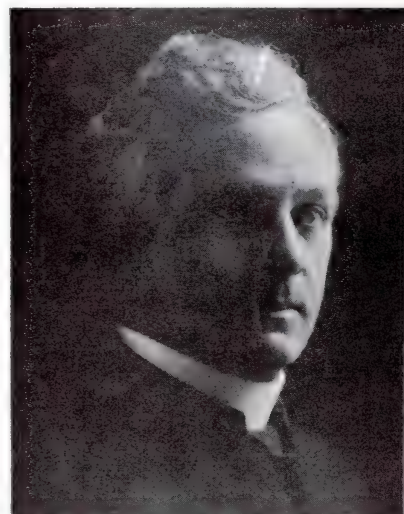
The Rev A. F. Douglas,  
1871-1875.



The Rev Thos. Tait, M.A., B.D.,  
1903-1914.



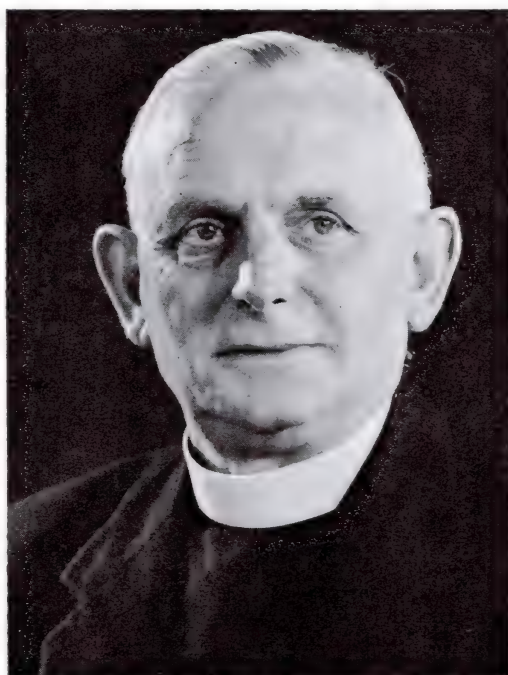
The Rev J. Elmslie, M.A., D.D.,  
1876-1903.



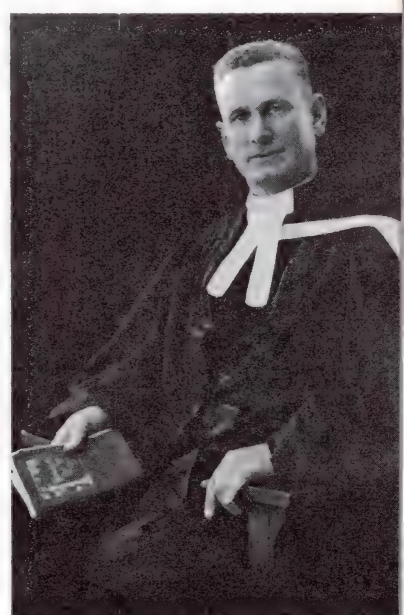
The Rev John Paterson, M.A.,  
1914-1924.



The Rev W. Bower Black, LL.B.,  
1924-1931.



The Very Rev Stuart C. Francis, B.A.,  
1943-1963.



The Very Rev Alan C. Watson,  
M.A., D.D., 1932-1941.





THE FIRST ST PAUL'S CHURCH, which stood on the site of the present Sunday School Hall, Lichfield Street. It was opened on May 19, 1867.



THE BIBLE CLASSES, 1963. As active if not as large as those of 1914.



In March, 1876, Mr Douglas was inducted to the Charge of Greymouth. He resigned through the ill-health of his wife, in March, 1878, and returned to England. Mrs Cottle, a granddaughter, who visited St Paul's in 1950, said, "The whole family was very proud of its New Zealand connection, and talked often of returning. One of my brothers now has the handsome French clock presented to grandfather by St Paul's."

The first Presbyterians had the good sense not to perpetuate deliberately the divisions of an old land in a new one. But inborn attitudes and outlook persist and here basically was conservatism at variance with liberalism. This was indicated in the words spoken by the Rev P. Barclay, formerly of Napier, when he appeared as commissioner for the Presbytery of Canterbury before the Presbytery of Northumberland, in October, 1870. Referring to Mr Douglas and his Call to St Paul's, Mr Barclay said that "in Canterbury the Episcopal Church was powerful and the Presbyterian minister who would succeed there must be a man of enlarged views and liberal sympathies. Nothing would have pained him more than to find one sent who was tremendously Scottish and awfully Free Church (cheers). He was a member of the Free Church and loved her dearly, but he had learned that the world was larger than Scotland and the Church of Christ included more than the Free Church of Scotland (loud cheers)"—the *Lyttelton Times*, January, 1871.

## THE MATURING TREE

### **THE MINISTRIES OF DR ELMSLIE, M.A., D.D., 1876-1903, AND THE REV THOMAS TAIT, M.A., B.D., 1903-1914.**

Both Dr Elmslie and the Rev T. Tait believed that the Church existed solely for the redemption of men and women. Dr Elmslie said, "The popular idea, I suspect, is this, that the Church should accommodate herself to the world's thoughts and tastes and expectations and thus become a successful candidate for public patronage and like a grand theatre bring the crowds within her gates. To do this, the Church would have to change her name, come down from her high level and abandon her high commission; for she was sent into the world not to amuse or entertain the public but to bless the souls of men, to extend the kingdom of Christ, and to build up the saints of the Most High in their most holy faith. Seek to raise the spirituality of the Church instead of bringing it low and strive to fill her courts by 'that great law of spiritual gravitation—the love of Christ dwelling in your hearts and manifesting itself in your every day life'."

Mr Tait said, "All of us who are in office thank God for the sustained liberality of the congregation; but what stirs our gratitude more deeply is the evidence of increasing spirituality. Too much can easily be made of organisation and the mechanics of church work; the dynamics are far more important. Finance and numbers are of value to the Church only as they



express and promote spirituality. In an age when many thirst after "novelties" and "attractions," it becomes us to remember that the Church's greatest novelty is newness of life; and that its supremest attraction is the Saviour who said, 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.'

Each believed that his first sphere of usefulness was the pulpit. Dr Elmslie asked that he might as far as possible be able to devote the forenoons of Thursday, Friday and Saturday each week to the work of preparation. Mr Tait said, "My sermons with very few exceptions are the result of fresh study from week to week. Don't visit me before 2 p.m.; if I get a telephone don't ring me up in the morning. Don't see me on Sunday before Church. See me afterwards."

Each emphasised the work of the pastorate in spite of the way in which with committee and other engagements, it tended to encroach on the work of the pulpit. Dr Elmslie said, "In addition to frequent visits to the sick and dying, I have visited 250 homes embracing over 1100 members and adherents. These do not include recent additions nor a number of young men and women in shops and offices. I regret that I have not seen all the latter." Mr Tait paid some 1500 visits in his first fourteen months but he preferred to be available daily at the manse from 2 p.m.-2.30 p.m., 6 p.m.-7 p.m., and almost every Saturday evening. Dr Elmslie walked or used a horse and gig; Mr Tait a four-wheeled phaeton with a very low step for the benefit of Mrs Tait who was an invalid.

The Rev John Elmslie, a native of Aberdeenshire, was called to St Paul's from St Paul's, Wanganui in 1875, at a stipend of £700 including allowance for a manse. He was forty-five. The Call was unanimous, signed by 147 members and 104 adherents. He was inducted on May 4, 1876, the Rev W. Douglas preaching on "Presbyterianism Briefly Expounded and Vindicated." He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1872 and received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Aberdeen in 1890. He retired in 1903, the congregation making him an allowance of £150 per annum. The Memorial Tablet in the Church vestibule was made and given by his daughter, Mrs C. Campbell.

"A simple, unostentatious man, of gentle manner but of great strength of character and intellect, his preaching simple but full of passion and expression of his own deep convictions," it is as pastor that he is still remembered. "I never met a minister who carried about with him so much of the Spirit of his Master. His influence was due not so much to his preaching as to his pastoral work in which much of the fruit of his ministry was won. An intense and earnest spiritual life had made its influence felt in the congregation" (the late Dr Erwin, D.D., Knox Church).

Dr Elmslie's resignation took effect from the date of Mr Tait's induction; thus there was no break in the rhythm of congregational life or in the continuity of the spiritual ministry for, looking back from fifty years after, the two men seem to have been singularly in accord.

The Rev Thomas Tait, M.A., B.D., of Brunswick, Melbourne, was called to St Paul's in July, 1903, and inducted on October 22. The stipend was £600 with a free manse. He was a brilliant scholar and an orator of the



first rank. Congregations taxed the capacity of the church and the weather was bad indeed if at any time they could be called scanty. He had remarkable dramatic ability. He once said, "I could fill St Paul's to this very door every Sunday if I cared to play certain pranks to approximate the church to the theatre." This was not boasting. The net takings, over £300, from three recitals which he gave in the Canterbury Hall in aid of the Organ and Sunday School Fund, represented an attendance of at least 2500 and hundreds were turned away.

During his ministry, membership increased rapidly and the debt was finally repaid; an organ was installed and a new Sunday school built. Church Extension was given fresh impetus. Called to Chalmers Church, Adelaide, he preached his last sermon in St Paul's on March 1, 1914. "I have a theory about preaching. It is that a man must have something in his soul which he is restless to get out. I am in the church because I have something from the Lord Jesus Christ in my own life and am compelled to proclaim it—Finally, brethren, farewell." (All quotations in this and following sections are taken from Annual Reports and Minute Books.)

### THE NEW CHURCH

At his first meeting with the Finance Committee, Dr Elmslie urged it to proceed with the new church. Gothic, however, in his opinion was a costly style and acoustically bad and it was agreed, finally, "that the design be Grecian." Mr Farr produced new plans and specifications for a wooden church to seat 1200, with galleries, pulpit, pews, internal gas fittings and a tower from which a bell one ton in weight could be swung, the whole to be completed in the most workmanlike manner for the sum of £6573, as a maximum cost.

The congregation met on June 27, to discuss the new plans. Dr Elmslie explained that he had had no idea of proposing one so large, but still he did not doubt that it would be filled. This probably was his last sphere of work as a minister. Humanly speaking, he had comparatively few years to work vigorously and he was anxious to make the best use of them. The present church did not afford space for all who wished to attend and it was imperative for them to remedy this defect.

The meeting approved the plans and appointed a Building Committee with John Anderson as Convener. When it found, however, that suitable timber could not be obtained for six months, Mr Farr prepared specifications for the same design in brick at an added cost of £1000.

These were submitted to the congregation on September 26. Taking into account, time, interest and depreciation, the Building Committee said it felt justified in recommending that Mr Peter Hyndman's tender of £7999 be accepted. The Finance Committee proposed to borrow £5000 at 8 per cent and to raise £3000 by subscription and other means. After long discussion, members and adherents present authorised the Building and Finance Committee "to mortgage or otherwise encumber the property of the congre-



gation in such manner as they shall think best," pledging themselves to their utmost endeavour to assist in raising sufficient funds by contribution or otherwise.

The foundation stone was laid by John Anderson. A blacksmith by trade, he had attended classes in mathematics, "mechanical philosophy" and chemistry at the Edinburgh School of Arts in order to fit himself further for life in a new country. He had arrived in Lyttelton with his wife and infant son in September, 1850, to found the firm of Andersons Ltd. A natural leader, always liberal, he was "the Father of the Congregation." He was widely respected in the business community and had a deep sense of community responsibility, holding office as second Mayor of Christchurch. The ceremony was held on November 6, 1876. A line of flags hung across Cashel Street, and an awning screened the sun's rays from the large number gathered on the platform. The Rev Charles Fraser spoke on "The Past History of the Presbyterian Church as a Church of the Reform." The church was opened on Sunday, October 28, 1877, without any preceding Presbyterian function. There were immense congregations at morning and evening services, even the pulpit steps being used. The acoustic properties of the church could not be bettered. The organ was installed in October, 1878.

### WORSHIP AND THE PSALMODY

In 1876, the psalmody, the united worship of the whole congregation in psalms and hymns, was central in the service of praise.

The function, primarily, of organist and choir-master and choir was to lead and strengthen the worship. There were no voluntaries or anthems and a newly-appointed organist was told "Improvement in the congregational singing is a matter about which we feel more deeply than the playing of the organ." Organist and choir came into their own, as it were, on such occasions as the annual soirée or the Annual Meeting (at these functions only religious items were given) or when, as in 1885, they gave two sacred concerts, one miscellaneous, the other a performance of Farmer's Oratorio, "Christ and His Soldiers."

Offerings and announcements were given after the sermon. In 1878, the Session agreed to a suggestion that a psalm or hymn might be sung during the offertory, only the choir standing. In 1884, it authorised the choir to use the new hymn-book during the offertory at the evening service, choice to be strictly confined to the anthems. Caution might have been the reason for this restriction, for when in 1885 the congregation adopted the new book, the Session did not seem to be wholly enthusiastic. "Many of the hymns are, doubtless, the best in existence. Some of the tunes we may learn NOT to adopt; but most of them are reckoned beautiful and in the highest degree suitable for the purposes of congregational psalmody." In 1898, anthems were allowed at both morning and evening worship, but the Session felt that since these were part of worship the congregation should be in possession of the words of the anthem being sung.

At the Annual Meeting in 1887, it was agreed to sing "Amen" at the



end of hymns, according to the book. There was one dissentient, an elderly man who always sat down noisily before the "Amen." "At hame the folk thought it no' right to sing Amen after a human hymn, sae he wadna' do it nor stand when it was sung."

Permission was refused in 1884 when the organist asked if he might play a soft voluntary at the beginning of the services. In 1894, the "propriety of opening and closing the Sabbath services with a voluntary was cordially approved" (by the Session).

It is not recorded when the custom first began of draping the pulpit in black and playing the "Dead March from Saul" on the occasion of the death of an elder or prominent official of the congregation. The Dead March was discontinued in 1911. There is no record of when draping was discontinued.

The Beadle or Church Officer played an important part in the service of worship. It was said of James Fleck in particular, "Worship seemed to begin when he came through the door of the vestry and with measured tread carried Bible and Hymn-book up the stairs of the pulpit, laying them down gently and reverently as if consciously remembering the Apostle's injunction, 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' The timing of his entrance followed by the ascent of Dr Elmslie to the pulpit was flawless."

### THE SESSION

A Session has a wide pastoral responsibility. The elders of this period were evangelical and men of prayer. "Although there has been a measure of external prosperity, spiritually speaking the past year has not been one of plenty for although admissions exceeded disjunctions by thirty, not one was by profession of faith" (1883).

At least five congregational missions were held between 1885 and 1913. All these missions failed, however, in that mainly regular church-goers attended the meetings. "Until this kind of work—the ingathering of those without, especially lapsed Presbyterians—be regarded with more practical interest, the Session feels that the congregation cannot be regarded as in a state of spiritual health." (1887.)

United believing prayer, (and so the congregational weekly prayer-meeting) "was the sine qua non for the bestowment of abundant blessing in the ministry of the Word and the successful carrying on of all the works of the church." Without it, "the congregation will not become spiritually aggressive on any scale." If sometimes "fossilised" or "effete" there were also periods of revival when the "attendance at weekly prayer-meeting has recently so much improved as to lead us to believe that members are in earnest setting about the work which God in his Providence is calling us to do." (1883.) It should be noted that the prayer-meeting did not depend on the presence of the minister. Elders were always prepared to take it and did, often for periods of several months.

To a suggestion that a series of church socials to welcome new-comers to the congregation should be held on alternate Wednesdays, this being the



evening most generally convenient, the Session said that although sympathetic to the matter, "It could not see its way to giving up Wednesday nights to the purpose." (1910.) The socials were held, successfully, after church on alternate Sundays.

A problem that called for the exercise of elders' "Christian tolerance" during this period concerned the Communion wine. Objections to the use of fermented and unfermented wine were made as early as 1885. In 1888 the Session, "to meet the wishes of all parties and not to ignore the conscientious objections of any minority, however small," decided to serve two wines, fermented to those sitting at the sides, unfermented to those sitting in the middle. Later in 1888 it was decided to serve fermented wine at morning Communion and unfermented wine at evening Communion. At that time eight Communion services were held during the year, at intervals of about six weeks, morning and evening alternately. In 1909, unfermented wine was served at two morning Communion services, "thereafter the Session to determine further in this matter." No decision is recorded, but in 1916, twelve to fifteen bottles of wine (intoxicating) found in the vestry were given to the minister to dispose of to cases of sickness where he thought fit. Communion cards were introduced in 1891, but it was not until 1903 that they replaced tokens altogether. Individual cups were first used in 1905.

The sacrament of baptism was observed at the morning service on the first Sunday of the month; but it had become the custom to hold the service privately in the home, making it in fact, a social occasion. Dr Elmslie frequently deplored this as being contrary to Scottish custom. Adult baptism was performed in the presence of the Session.

In 1891, an elder, Robert Beattie, elected to the Sydenham Licensing Committee on a temperance platform, pledged himself with others not to issue any publicans' licences. All applications were refused. As a result of the controversy that followed the Committee's action, the Local Option Act was passed, giving electors power by their votes to close hotels in their electorates, to vote a district "dry." In 1909, the Session recommended to the Finance Committee that an annual special collection be taken on behalf of the "No-Licence League." In 1914, it gave permission for "No-Licence" hand-bills to be distributed at the church door.

In 1909 the Session Clerk, Mr William Gavin, died. He was first appointed in 1864 and had had 35 years in office. He was a man well-versed in the law of the Church and punctilious in his observance of it. He was a country traveller for the firm of Black, Beattie and Co., Ltd. Scrupulously honest in business as he was congenial and homely, he was welcome always at country homes; he was once seen in a paddock measuring a farm-lad for a new suit.

### **CHURCH EXTENSION ASSOCIATION**

In 1879, the Session through the Sabbath School Association controlled four Sunday schools: Central, Colombo Street, Montreal Street, Bingsland (Richmond). There were 60 teachers and 527 scholars.



**Colombo Street:** This school was begun in the Sydenham School on November 6, 1876. David Duncan and Robert Beattie were joint Superintendents. The late Stewart Robinson recalled that as a little boy he often accompanied his father on Saturday nights when he trundled a harmonium on a wheel-barrow from St Paul's to Sydenham in preparation for Sunday school. In 1878, William Henderson and James Watt, elders, began cottage meetings in the home of William Mauchline, another elder. On March 13, 1879, the nucleus gathered thus became a separate charge, St David's Presbyterian Church, and the control of the Sunday school was transferred from St Paul's.

**Montreal Street:** This school was begun on November 19, 1876, in the Montreal Street Hall, by John Cameron, an elder. In 1878, at his suggestion, the Session agreed to rent the hall for one year as a Mission station of St Paul's, with evening services as well as Sunday school. No one being available to take the services, John Cameron himself held cottage meetings in the district until in February, 1880, the Rev David McKee arrived in Christchurch from Dublin. He supplied morning and evening services at Montreal Street until it, too, was made a separate charge—now Knox Presbyterian Church. Mr McKee was inducted in April, 1880. This school also was separated from St Paul's.

**Bingsland (Richmond):** This school, opened early in 1879, remained a branch school until 1916, chiefly because there was no suitable hall in the district in which to hold services. The first Superintendent was Mr S. C. Farr, the church architect. In 1912, a section was bought on the corner of Chrystall and Leith Streets and a strong local committee formed to raise funds to build a hall.

**Ferry Road, now St Peter's,** was formed when a small group of Congregationalists and their minister were constituted a newly established charge of the Presbytery, their minister, the Rev. Samuel Slocumbe, being inducted according to Presbyterian procedure on March 26, 1881. Records are derived for the most part from reminiscences, and it is not clear if St Paul's had begun already a school in the district, but it is certain that for many years after the charge was formed, the Sunday school was staffed from St Paul's, David Duncan and Robert Beattie, elders, both being Superintendent.

**Linwood:** This school was opened on February 5, 1905, in the Borough Council Chambers with fifteen children. In 1909, Session formed a committee to begin evening services in the Rolleston Street Hall to which the school had been moved in 1906. In 1911, Mr Dabourne, a Home Missionary was appointed to work in Linwood, Richmond and New Brighton, the congregation paying £100-£120 per annum towards his salary. In September 1912, Mr (later the Rev.) James Tennant, a city missionary from Glasgow, was appointed, Mr Dabourne having been transferred to Wellington. A suitable



section was bought on Linwood Avenue and a strong local committee was appointed to raise funds for a hall.

**New Brighton:** At New Brighton, Presbyterian residents had bought a section some years previously. In 1913, a room was secured in the Public School, where Mr Tennant regularly conducted morning service and a Sunday school was begun with four children. The local committee, with the help of a loan from the Trustees of the Presbyterian New Century Fund, quickly raised enough for a hall to be built. It was opened on Sunday, August 31, 1913.

### THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Members of this committee were now managers, not deacons; that is, they were no longer ordained. The Committee itself did not become the Board of Management until 1908. During this period, sources of annual income were first collections, then pew rents, (these were £1 per sitting on the ground floor and at the front of the gallery, and 10s elsewhere in the gallery). Extra funds were raised as before, by subscription, bazaars, concerts and soirées.

**Building Fund Overdraft:** Additional costs were involved in the provision of such as: a horse-shed, paths, fencing, furnishings (including the organ), replacing with corrugated iron the slate roof which leaked badly due to the very low pitch of the roof; the addition of a lecture-room to the old church to lessen over-crowding in the Sunday school; the legal expenses of the St Paul's Church Property Act which, passed in 1881, brought the whole of the church property into one Trust. Because of these expenses, the Finance Committee was faced with raising £5500 by subscription or other means, instead of £3000.

To reduce the overdraft the Committee transferred £1000 to the mortgage on the church property, leaving £4500 to be found by the congregation. This it did by January, 1884, when the final £225 was transferred to the Ordinary Account.

**The Church Mortgage and Ordinary Revenue:** Dr Elmslie had not been able to find a suitable house to rent near the church. So in 1880 the Committee bought one a few doors past the old church in Lichfield Street. The price was £1500, the whole amount being left as mortgage on the property at 8 per cent. The stipend was reduced to £600. The total liabilities by mortgage were now £7000. The effect upon the ordinary revenue was almost disastrous. In 1881, interest was £690; in 1886, the debit balance was £760. From 1876 until 1914, in three years only were there credit balances—1908 (£11), 1909 (£27), 1910 (£9). The present 1963 membership, also 400, in similar circumstances, would be required to raise some £18,000 in six and a half years and to find up to £3000 annually in interest, over and above the ordinary running expenses of the congregation.

These were now the "hungry eighties" when unemployment and destitution were widespread and people left the colony in such numbers that the movement became known as "The Exodus." In 1885, Dr Elmslie volun-



tarily reduced his stipend to £500 and again in 1890 to £450. "Whatever share of this burden could reasonably be laid on him he would cheerfully bear it and had no fear of the results if only as in time past they continued a harmonious devoted people." In 1900, £50 per annum was restored. There is no record of any other increase.

**Debt Extinction Efforts:** By 1898, the mortgage had been reduced by only £1350 in twenty three years. Interest had fallen, however, from 8 per cent to 5 per cent. Two legacies, £200 to the Ladies' Association from Miss Fanny Stevens and £1700 from the estate of Mr Thomas Owen were now invested in the mortgages, that is, the congregation was mortgagee to itself to the sum of £1900. Except for £10 paid annually to the Ladies' Association, no interest was paid on this amount until 1907, when the Committee began to put aside £85 annually from current revenue towards paying off the church debt. The Century Scheme, to largely reduce the debt by the end of the Nineteenth Century, was now introduced. By 1900, £2000 had been subscribed. In 1901, £250 was received from the estate of William Chrystall, who, as Chairman of the Committee from 1881 until his death, had guided its finances throughout a time "when the hand of a master was most urgently needed."

Mr Chrystall had been a wholesale merchant and importer dealing also in wine and spirits from which much of his profit was made. When he realised that this was incompatible with his profession as a Christian he relinquished his licence to sell wine and spirits.

The mortgage was reduced again in 1903, when the manse was sold for £1100. By arrangement with Dr Orchard, a manse was built on his property in Latimer Square. This the committee rented for five years for £110 per annum, with the option of a further term. In 1911, a final effort, the TOTAL DEBT EXTINCTION FUND, cleared the remaining £1300 by December 31. The congregation was free of mortgage debt, except for such sums as it held itself.

Thanksgiving services were held on Sunday, February 4, 1912, and at a rally on the following Wednesday evening, congratulatory messages were received from former members throughout New Zealand. "It was especially gratifying to see the pleasure and delight of older members."

#### **Other Undertakings:**

- (1) 1901: Renovations to the church, including repairs to pews in the gallery infected with borer. During this period the congregation met in the Choral Hall.
- (2) Erection of the Young Men's Bible Class room (the class raising £80 towards the cost of £362).
- (3) 1905: Installation of a new organ (costing £1066) and a Knitic Swanton Electric Blower (costing £130). Formerly a boy had hand-pumped the old organ; the new one before the installation of the blower needed a man for services, two men for recitals.
- (4) Erection of a new Sunday school building (costing £1867). This was opened on June 11, 1907, the old church now being unsafe. None of these projects was begun until most of the money needed was in hand.

## THE LADIES' ASSOCIATION AND THE P.W.M.U.

The Ladies' Association was formed in 1878 to co-ordinate the many activities of the women of the congregation. It met weekly, every meeting being preceded by a short meeting for prayer. In 1902, the programme was widened to include missionary activity when the ladies sewed for boxes for the children of Home Missionaries, while missionary letters were read aloud. By 1904, this monthly afternoon had become the St Paul's branch of the P.W.M.U. It continued to work as part of the Association until in 1913 it was compelled by the constitution of the P.W.M.U. to appoint its own officers and conduct its business separately.

The Association continued the work of the Tract Society for a number of years, "distributing hundreds of Gospel messages and evangelistic and other serials among members and adherents and their non-church going neighbours. It has rendered benevolent aid to ten or twelve families in distress and has also rendered valuable assistance to the pastor in visiting the families of the church and bringing under his notice many cases of sickness or distress which otherwise might not have been heard of (1881)." "Visiting ladies" were associated with every elder, and Dr Elmslie made a practice of attending a meeting one afternoon each month to hear the ladies' report on their visiting. So much was visiting the normal work of the Association, that in 1911-1912, it presented its report as the Ladies' Visiting Association.

Associated with visiting was the benevolent work of the congregation. Funds for the benevolent work of the congregation were received from the sale of needlework, a special collection when the ladies reported that funds were exhausted, and from the interest, £10, from the Fanny Stevens bequest; a member of the congregation gave five tons of coal and blankets every winter for many years. In 1902, retiring offerings on Communion Sabbath were introduced, stabilising the Poor Fund as well as reviving an old Scottish custom. The Poor Fund, however, could be used to assist members and adherents only. St Paul's was represented on the committee of the Mayor's Coal and Blanket Fund, but it had power to grant only coal, a quarter of a ton, except in exceptional cases and one or two blankets.

The extent of State aid to the aged was 6/11d per week to men and women over 65 if they had been sober and moral for the last five years and had a yearly income of less than £34. (Pension Bill 1898.) David Duncan (ordained as an elder in 1882) who with his brother, Peter, founded the firm of P. and D. Duncan, Ltd., left direction in his Will that his oldest employees were to have employment so long as they wanted it, and so long as the gates of the Works were open. In 1913, the Association supported an appeal for a Deaconess Fund made by Mr Tait to enable Sister Elsie to assist necessitous cases. "Unless you give her monetary support, this work will break her heart for it is arduous and depressing. Frequently there are empty cupboards, scanty clothing and sometimes sickness. If such distress cannot be relieved to some extent, it would be better not to visit at all."



Finally, for every new undertaking within the congregation, the Ladies raised funds by special means. Thus when, in 1912, the congregation decided to support a Home Missionary in Linwood, Richmond and New Brighton, a meeting of the ladies was called to "consider some scheme for the purpose of raising this money." Soirées and bazaars were the usual means, nothing being done that was inconsistent with Christian principle.

### LITERARY SOCIETIES:

In the Parliamentary session of 1902-3, legislation was brought forward to give free secondary education to every child able to pass a "Proficiency" examination in Std. 6. Up till then free places in secondary schools were given by scholarships only. Thus Literary Societies had an important place educationally and culturally in the life of the Colony.

**Young Men's Society:** This was formed in 1880 with forty members "to promote social intercourse amongst its members and to educate them intellectually and morally." In 1884, it became the **St Paul's Church Literary Society** with an average weekly attendance of 49 (including young women). Programmes included: evenings with Macaulay, Scott, Dickens and Mrs Hemans; essays on 'The Statesmen of the Colony', 'Physiognomy', 'The Property Tax', 'The French Revolution' and debates on 'The Deceased Wife's Sister Bill', 'Should England Annex Egypt', 'Female Franchise', 'Was the Execution of Charles I Unjust.' A Literary Societies' Union was formed "and this Society had the pleasure of seeing Dr Elmslie made Premier and another member Colonial Treasurer. The beneficial effect, educationally speaking, upon those who have taken a practical interest in the Society's work is very marked."

No report is recorded for this society after 1901. In 1904, the Y.M.B.C. formed a Literary and Debating Society as a week-night activity. In 1908 this was reformed as the **St Paul's Young People's Society**. It met fortnightly. In 1914, the Society came second in the Debating Clubs' Annual Competitions for the Championship Shield. It won prizes for Essay and Original Story and was placed in every debate and speech, thus approaching "the high position in the debating world held many years before by the St Paul's Literary Society."

### ST PAUL'S CHURCH TEMPERANCE SOCIETY

This Society was formed at a public meeting in May, 1883, at which the Rev R. Waddell, Dunedin, presented an address on "The Motive Power of Total Abstinence." The aims of the Society were:—"To promote the habit of temperance; to discourage and abolish the practice of drinking alcoholic liquors as beverages in private life, at social gatherings, and in business transactions; to reclaim the intemperate; to assist in forming a sound public opinion on the subject of temperance and generally to take any action by which the cause of temperance will be promoted."

The Society met monthly; programmes included music, recitations, read-

ings, dialogues, and addresses on some aspect of temperance. At the end of its first year, the roll was represented by 106 signatures to the Pledge, "I resolve that in the strength of Divine Grace, I will abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage and will use my influence in inducing others to do likewise."

"A lively interest in the moral and spiritual well-being of our fellow men is the duty of all intelligent Christians. It is no excuse to say 'Temperance work belongs to temperance lecturers and societies; our vocation is to teach more strictly the doctrines of the Gospel'. The moral and spiritual ruin of thousands brings it inside the Church's province. Friends, if ever there was a doctrine taught by Christ, it is that of living for the sake of others—being holy examples." (1885).

### **ST PAUL'S BAND OF HOPE**

This, also formed in 1883, was the temperance branch of the Sunday school. It met monthly in St Paul's, less regularly in branch schools. Each session opened with a Fruit Soirée at which every child received a paper-bag containing an orange, a bag of sweets and a bun for his tea.

"Evenings are spent in imparting instruction in the cause of temperance in an endeavour to build up in the children a distaste for intoxicating liquors and tobacco. Programmes are varied—short addresses, recitations, musical items, with occasional magic lantern exhibitions. Scholars to a large extent, supply the items. An especially gratifying feature was the close attention given to addresses on 'Subjects of Practical Everyday Life,' by Dr Thomas. The piano ordered from London came duly to hand. A large part of the purchase price is still due. We trust that the congregation will turn out in large numbers to a concert in aid of this fund."

### **THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR**

This was formed in 1893 with five members. It met fortnightly. At the end of its first year, it reported thirty-six active members. Active members were committed Christians who were pledged to some form of Christian action.

The Society worked through committees. "The Sewing Committee made a large number of articles and held two 'object' nights when a large stock of groceries was received for distribution. The Relief Committee distributes food and clothing to the poor of the district and visits the hospital fortnightly. The Sunday School Committee supplies substitutes for the teaching staff, looks up absent scholars and visits in the neighbourhood of the church to enrol children whom members see in the streets. The Outlook Committee introduces new members to the Society and looks after absentees.

"The Social Committee visits the Jubilee Home where it provides tea for the inmates and holds a short meeting. Last November it gave a tea to 80 poor children. After music, recitations and games, Dr Elmslie and Mr MacRae gave short addresses. The Prayer Committee arranges and conducts cottage meetings and has charge of the Sunday morning prayer meet-



ing to ask God's blessing on the work of the day. The Missions' Committee arranges occasional missionary meetings. The Temperance Committee has just been formed and will work in conjunction with the Band of Hope."

### **SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

All ages, from infants to fifteen and sixteen year-olds met together. At the Central school, infants met separately in 1880 when the new lecture room was built. The school was first organised according to day-school standards in 1905. The Cradle Roll was introduced in 1909 and the sand-tray in 1911. The Association included teachers of the Central and Branch schools. Organisation was simple. As well as teaching members, the staff included a Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer, Organist and Librarian.

**Finance:** From the beginning, collections were given to missions. Running expenses were met by inadequate annual special collections. In 1877, the Education Act established free, secular and compulsory education. In 1879 the Association which controlled four Sunday schools was £40 in debt. "Unless the congregation is willing to give on a more generous scale, the schools must seriously suffer. Now that secular education is free, surely parents might be more liberal in providing for the religious education of their children." (1883.) In 1898 an annual grant from ordinary revenue replaced the special collection.

**The Sunday School Library:** This was the only library available to children and young people of this period. It, too, suffered from lack of funds, "Our libraries are very poorly supplied, every book being in circulation. We think if the natural desire for reading that exists in the young was supplied with good and wholesome literature, we should then hear less of the Colonial larrikin than we do. Fifty pounds could well be spent (1879). Only £5 has been available for additions over the last two years and teachers feel that this is just keeping the library in existence." (1883.) In 1910, however, 700 books in good condition were on the shelves, the monthly subscription of 1d being used to buy new books.

**The Syllabus** included the Shorter Catechism, which was memorised (with proofs for senior scholars) and Scripture. The Scripture Reading Union was introduced in 1884 by Mr S. C. Farr, who regularly visited all Presbyterian Sunday schools, selling cards for 1d each. "It has 110 members. Parents would do well to encourage their children to join the Union which aims at systematic reading and studying of God's Word and to a certain extent supplies the want felt owing to the exclusion of the Bible from the schools." (1885.)

**Assembly Examinations:** Presbytery examinations are reported in 1890. Later, Assembly examinations in Catechism, Scripture and Essay (for senior grades only) were introduced. Children entered voluntarily. In 1895, 54 entered from the Central School, winning a total of 86 prizes. In 1913 the Linwood branch school won one gold medal and the Senior Championship Banner open for competition among all schools in New Zealand.

**Teacher Training:** For many years this was a form of mutual aid. "The Teachers' Weekly Preparation Class held from ten to eleven o'clock each Sabbath morning has been steadily kept up; also the monthly meetings for prayer. The quarterly meetings for business have been regularly held. At these, papers are read by teachers and the criticisms that follow are always helpful." (1883.) Later, the Sabbath School Teachers' Institute planned such courses of instruction as "The Geography, Botany and Ethnology of what are usually known as Bible Lands." Every year after 1900 some teachers sat the Assembly Teachers' Examinations, the best year being 1904, when eleven teachers sat from a teaching staff of 26.

**Evangelism** was the end of all teaching. Senior scholars were included in all congregational missions. "We had the joy of seeing quite a number of our senior scholars make open profession of faith. Their subsequent consistent conduct warrants us in believing this profession genuine (1898). "The Rev Mr Lyall held special services for the young which God abundantly honoured and blessed, no fewer than 75 of our young people openly confessing Christ." (1901.)—Ages were probably 12-17.

**The Annual Concert and the Annual Treat** were social occasions. In 1880 advantage was taken of that modern convenience, the tram cars, to carry the children to their picnic. The annual Sunday School Anniversary might be described as a gala occasion. The children, trained in special hymns for weeks beforehand, sat on a platform which was set up at the front of the church. There were usually three services when "it was a genuine pleasure to us to witness the attention and decorum of the children." (1898.)

### THE BOYS' BRIGADE

This was formed in 1902 as the No. 2 Christchurch Company with over 30 on the roll and average attendances of 24 at drill on Friday, and 20 at Bible Class on Sunday. But, "in this colony where military drill is taught in all the town schools there is not the same inducement for boys to join the Boys' Brigade as in other parts where military drill is not taught in schools." The Brigade appears to have disbanded at the end of its second year.

### THE BIBLE CLASSES

The Minister's Bible Class, formed in 1878, met weekly for Bible study and instruction. In 1885 it became the **Young People's Bible Study and Christian Work Association**, the programme being widened to include Christian action.

"The chief value of these efforts lies in this, that they imprint upon the young mind the all important fact that Christian work and Christian liberality are essential to the healthful development of every Christian life. The membership is 120, the average attendance 90." Robert Lamb, the first missionary from St Paul's, was a foundation member of this Society.



From 1880, two other Bible Classes for young men and young women respectively met in the church and the vestry on Sunday afternoons. They seem to have been advanced senior Sunday school classes under the control of the Sunday School.

The modern Bible Class began in St Paul's in 1894, when the **Young Men's Class** under the leadership of Mr E. D. Johnson adopted the co-operative methods introduced into St John's, Wellington, by Mr George, later Sir George, Troup. It was the second class in the Colony to do so. The traditional teacher-scholar relationship was scrapped. "A class committee draws up the syllabus. A member opens up the subject for each meeting, generally with a paper. It is then discussed by members, the leader acting as Chairman, guiding and controlling the discussion." By 1897, the class was making its own report to the Annual Meeting of the congregation as a self-governing entity separate from the Sunday School.

"Our Thursday evening meetings are held regularly. Results are very noticeable in the decided improvement in members' elocutionary powers. The annual camp at Christmas was much enjoyed (1897). The membership since the opening of the classroom is greatly increased. Although we have lost 25 members, we still have 84 on the roll. The library contains 250 books, and circulation continues good. The Rev Mr Lyall's mission will long be remembered. We feel that the class's healthy condition is due to decisions made for Christ at that time." (1901.)

Annual inter-class visits at Easter had begun in 1898 between St John's and St Paul's. In 1902 the camp was held at Wainoni, 150 delegates being present from Dunedin, Wellington, Wanganui, Masterton and Christchurch to form the New Zealand Presbyterian Bible Class Union. From this time attendance at the Dominion Easter Camp, at which the annual meeting of the Union was held, was included in the class programme.

"At our Annual Meeting, discussion on the physical side of our work resulted in the formation of a Harrier Club which meets on Thursday evenings (1907). Regularly once a month a short prayer meeting is held at close of class. The Evangelistic Convener must feel gratified to perceive the tone of this meeting (1910). The quality of the essays and tone of the discussions have kept up to a high standard. Sunday teas have been successful in cementing the fellowship of the class (1911). Our members had a fairly successful season on the hockey field. We are taking part in the One-Get-One campaign and hope thus to greatly increase our membership." (1913.)

**The Young Women's Bible Class**—ages 19 upwards—was reformed on co-operative lines in 1904. In seven months membership increased from 20 to 62. "The Committee would remind members that the singing requires more spirit and heartiness; that much more help could be given to our leader if the subject were so prayerfully studied beforehand that members could be ready with enquiries and comments, and that more responsive prayer is desirable." (1904.) During the winter months, the sewing class made 116 new garments and 30 were renovated for distribution to the poor. (1905.)

"Financially we have not so much in hand as last year, having purchased an organ. Funds for it were raised by levying members and working

up a concert and social (1906). During the winter the sewing class met as usual. A class in First Aid was held; 30 attended and 21 passed the Ambulance Examination. A Home Nursing Class will be held this winter (1909). The class took up the game of 'Basket Ball' very heartily. Once a month we do the darning and mending at the Orphanages." (1911.)

The Junior Young Men's Class was reformed in 1905 with 21 members and the Junior Young Women's Class in 1907 with 32 members. The age of members in both classes was 15-18 inclusive. Class programmes included buying a harmonium, teas, winter social club and Christmas Camp (Young Men), a class library, a weekly prayer group and the adoption of systematic giving (Young Women). "Each member gives 1d per week to the 'Our Nurse Fund' (Nurse Milne, later Mrs T. E. Riddle, was B.C. Own Nurse at Jagadhri at this time) and 1d to the B.C. Travelling Secretary Fund." (An apprentice dressmaker began at 5s per week and received a yearly rise of 3s per week. A Training College student received £30 per annum.)

### **DR ROBERT LAMB, M.B., CH.B., B.D.**

Robert Lamb grew up in St Paul's and was the first missionary from the congregation. In 1892 after he had finished his training in Edinburgh, he was ordained by the General Assembly in Auckland and went with Mrs Lamb to Ambrim in the New Hebrides. A hurricane in which his young twin sons were killed wrecked the station within a year of his arrival. The makeshift houses were hardly rebuilt before they were burned down by fire. A volcanic eruption a year later destroyed the station and the food gardens. Nevertheless, a hospital with 52 beds was established.

In 1904 Dr Lamb resigned with tuberculosis of the lungs. He retired to Wentworth, in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales. He made the swagmen who regularly passed through the district his special care. Sitting on a log at the corner of the road near his home, he would talk to them and then take a New Testament from his pocket and read aloud. When he became too ill to walk to the corner, he went in a carriage. As long as he was able to go, he sat on the same log waiting. His tombstone, following his directions, stands near where the log was. On it are the words with which he most often sent the swagmen on their way. "Come unto me all ye that labour and I will give you rest." He died in 1907. There is a memorial tablet in the church vestibule.

### **THE REV ALEX. REESE**

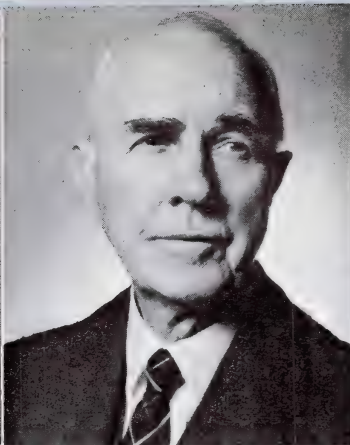
The Rev Alex. Reese was the second missionary to grow up in St Paul's, and is a brother of the late T. W. Reese. He was a member of the Bible Class, which under the inspiring leadership of Mr E. D. Johnston was experimenting with new methods in youth work.

Like the Very Rev T. E. Riddle who was also a member of this class (as was the late Very Rev George Jupp) he evidently belonged to the Y.M.C.A. Mission Band which on Sunday evenings held open-air meetings in the





The late T. W. REESE, a founder of the Presbyterian Y.M.B.C. Union in 1902.



The REV ALEX. REESE was the second missionary from St Paul's. He worked in Brazil from 1909 to 1951.



DR ROBERT LAMB, M.B., Ch.B., B.D., the first missionary from the congregation who went to the New Hebrides in 1892.



The REV WILLIAM and MRS FRANCIS, Onesua High School, New Hebrides.



MISS JESSIE HARDIE, St Paul's Own Missionary from 1923-1951, at Jagadhri, India.



MISS GLADYS RIDDLE, who followed Miss Hardie as Own Missionary from 1951 to 1956.



The late MRS J. E. MAC-KAY, one of the first women in St Paul's to be made a manager and elder.



SISTER VIVIENNE SINCLAIR, who was appointed in 1957.

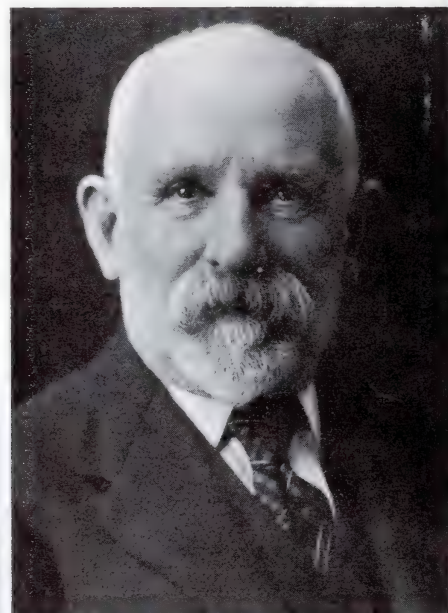


There were 29 teachers on the staff of the Sunday School at the time of the Jubilee, April 19-26, 1914.





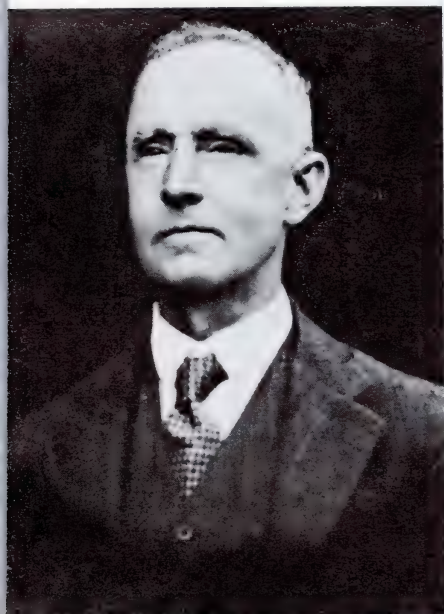
MR J. GIBB, Session  
Clerk from 1878 to 1887.



MR GEORGE BURN,  
session Clerk from 1917  
to 1927.



MR WILLIAM GAVIN, who,  
appointed first in 1864, gave 35  
years' service as Session Clerk.



MR D. C. BURNS, Session  
Clerk from 1913 to 1917,  
1927 to 1944.



MR S. E. MCGREGOR,  
appointed Session Clerk  
in 1944.



streets. He describes himself as a street-preacher who got into the ministry almost haphazardly.

He worked at a trade for eight hours a day, studied five or six hours at night and spent an intensive Sunday teaching and preaching. At Canterbury College he got a good grounding in Formal Logic, Psychology and Ethics. He attended Professor Arnold Wall's lectures on the English language and literature and did Latin privately with a tutor. However, the years were slipping by, and so he left Christchurch to study at a small Divinity School in the U.S.A. which was strong in its course of the English Bible and in the ordinary subjects of a Presbyterian Theological College. He graduated in 1908 and was accepted as a missionary by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, of New York. He was sent to Brazil in 1909 where he worked in the 18th century civilisation of the interior for 42 years.

He found a most hospitable and kindly people who opened their doors to a Presbyterian itinerant missionary, travelling around with a mule team, seeking opportunities to preach God's way of peace and acceptance with Him—by grace, through faith alone. Of this way of life a member of his family said "Life in the U.S.A. on vacation is interesting while it lasts, in Brazil it is thrilling all the time." Mr and Mrs Reese retired in 1951 and now live at Peacehaven, Invercargill.

#### **SISTER PHEBE TORALTON AND SISTER ELSIE LILLY**

Sister Phebe Toralton was appointed in October, 1901, her salary, £70 per annum, being paid by a member of the congregation. In December, 1904, the Session ended her appointment as in its opinion the work should be carried on, on broader lines. It offered £20 towards the salary of a City Deaconess. Apparently this had already been considered by other congregations but they were slow to move. Sister Phebe accepted an appointment in Invercargill.

In June, 1913, Sister Elsie Lilly, a missionary returned from India, accepted a three months' engagement, to be continued from month to month on a basis of a month's notice on either side, at a salary of £75 per annum. Her work seemed to be largely that of a City Deaconess.

#### **JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS 1914**

These were conducted by the Rev John Paterson, M.A., of Chalmers Church, Sydney, who preached on Sunday, April 19, when the Mayor and Councillors attended the morning service and again on Sunday, April 26. On the Saturday evening, Mr Coulson, the organist, gave a recital and on the Monday evening, a monster tea and public meeting were held.

Fifty years had passed and the pattern of congregational life was established. This period was outstanding in four respects. They are—the strong evangelistic purpose, the place given to corporate prayer, the aggressive missionary activity shown in Church Extension and the sense of social responsibility expressed in concern for the poor and participation in the temperance cause. These are marks of the apostolic church.





2

THE SECOND  
FIFTY YEARS





## THE SECOND FIFTY YEARS

*"I myself will plant it . . . that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar; and under it will dwell all kinds of beasts; in the shade of its branches birds of every sort will nest. Ezek. 17: 23.*

*"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Rev. 22: 2.*

Socially, this period was to see the expansion of educational opportunities, a labour policy of full employment with the introduction and development of Social Security and the growth of organised sport and entertainment. So with passing years there was less need for many congregational activities, especially the literary societies, the Sunday School and Bible Class libraries and organised charity.

In the religious sphere, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist Churches and Church of Christ were to move towards corporate union as the United Church of New Zealand. The World Council of Churches was to be formed in 1948 and its branch, the National Council of Churches in New Zealand, with their tremendous opportunities for relief and inter-church aid throughout the world. There was to come, also, the expanded conception of the missionary which would include the Christian farmer, carpenter, bridge-builder and technician as well as the ordained minister, teacher, doctor and nurse.

Domestically, the fundamental change in polity was to be the admission of women to Boards of Management and the Session. If the congregation of 1914 could have foreseen any of these events, they would have seemed revolutionary. Yet they were part of the changing climate in which the next four ministries would be spent.

### THE MINISTRY OF THE REV JOHN PATERSON, M.A.

The congregation was so impressed with Mr Paterson's services at the time of the Jubilee, that it agreed unanimously to call him to the pastorate of St Paul's. The call was accepted and he was inducted on July 10, 1914. On August 4, the 1914-18 war broke out.

Mr Paterson was a scholar who gave careful thought and study to his preparation and preached vigorously in a strong and resonant voice. A man of forceful character, he soon came to be recognised as one of the leading men of the city, taking as far as his ministerial duties allowed, a prominent place in religious, social, educational and patriotic work. With so large and scattered a membership, his pastoral duties were strenuous, especially during the war and the terrible influenza epidemic which followed it. When two serious illnesses limited his capacity for visiting, the congregation subscribed to buy him a car "so that he might do his pastoral work more efficiently and with comfort to himself." This was in 1921.

He was an excellent elocutionist and could provide an evening's enter-

tainment in aid of church funds. His particular interest, however, seems to have been the Sunday School where in times of emergency he acted as Superintendent, both at Linwood and the Central School. A musician who sang well, he trained the children for several years for their Sunday School Anniversary and supervised the annual Sunday School concerts.

In the matter of Infant Baptism he took a strong stand and the Session supported him, stating that "baptisms will be dispensed on the last Sunday of each month at the morning service, and that except in cases of emergency, which are to be reported to the Session, the parents shall present their children in the church at the regular church service." An elder was called before Session to explain his reasons for neglecting his elder's duties. When he did not appear or write, his name was immediately removed from the Elders' Roll. Another elder resigned because of monetary difficulties. He was also asked to appear before Session where he was closely questioned concerning his position. It was evident that his difficulties were due to misfortune. The Session expressed its sympathy, counselled him and refused to accept his resignation. The authority of the Session was still supreme in the congregation of that day, but its judgment was tempered with mercy.

During the war, social functions were few, "our common peril and common bereavement having proved a sufficiently uniting force." But the women's organisations were swept into "years of almost continuous practical effort." The orphanages, Church Extension, missions and the poor of the congregation and city were not neglected, and in addition, a Red Cross Auxiliary was formed. This included participation in Red Cross fund-raising such as week-end stalls in Cathedral Square as well as the usual knitting, sewing, swab and bandage making and packing parcels for the men overseas. In 1916 a river Carnival was held in aid of the local Patriotic Fund. The combined Presbyterian Church, with St. Paul's taking a leading part, raised £880, the largest amount raised by any body or organisation connected with the Carnival.

The Licensing Amendment Act, 1910, altered the closing hours of hotels from 11 p.m. to 10 p.m. During the war a strong feeling developed in favour of closing bars at 6 p.m. The Ladies' Association canvassed on behalf of this reform which became law on December 1, 1917. In 1919, the Session released Mr Paterson to lecture on prohibition in the Hurunui Electorate and allowed prohibition posters to be put on Notice-Board and Sunday School. The Band of Hope was still very active.

The war, over, the congregation decided to erect a Roll of Honour to the 117 young men who had gone from the congregation, and, as well, memorial screens enclosing two new vestries in memory of those who had fallen—twenty-six in all. At that time, the church extended to the back walls of the present vestries, the only vestry being behind the apse of the church. On July 22, 1919, the official thanksgiving Sunday appointed by King George V, the congregation gave for the memorials, £1034, in promises and cash as its Peace and Thanksgiving Offering.

The work entailed reducing the size of the pulpit platform in width



and height, rearrangement of the choir seats, lowering the organ some 4ft bringing the console out to the front of the choir and altering the Communion platform. But after work had started, the organ builder asked if he might amend his price. The Board refused and cancelled the contract and an opportunity to modernise the organ by bringing the console forward was lost. On July 18, 1920, the Rt. Rev. J. A. Asher, M.A., unveiled the screens, and the Rev John Paterson, M.A., unveiled the Roll of Honour.

Meanwhile the work of Church Extension was continuing. In 1915 the congregation authorised a loan of £1350 for building at Linwood and Richmond, provided it was not raised on St. Paul's properties. In December of the same year, New Brighton became a fully-sactioned Home Mission charge, with Mr (later the Rev.) J. Bickerstaffe, Home Missionary. Halls were built at Linwood and Richmond at a cost of £1250. The mortgage on each was £550 at 6 per cent. Opening services at Linwood were held on January 23, and at Richmond on July 16, 1916. Mr Tennant was still Missioner. It was hoped that within a few months these branches would be self-supporting, but it was not until July 1, 1923, that Linwood, now St. George's, became a fully-sanctioned Home Mission charge, free of debt. Richmond, now St. Columba, was formally declared a Home Mission charge by the Presbytery in October, 1924. A 'separation from St. Paul's' party was held to celebrate the event. Thus ended a Home Mission work covering six charges and extending over 48 years.

Financially, these were difficult years. The Duplex Envelope system whereby contributors gave both to pastoral support and missions, was introduced in 1915. Funds under the heading of missions were allocated annually to Youth of the Church, Social Service, Knox College, Temperance and Home, Maori and Foreign Missions. The proportion suggested by the Board was two-thirds to pastoral support and one-third to missions, but each contributor decided the proportion for himself. The system began with 260 contributing and the Board announced hopefully "the collections are now not so much influenced by the weather which before was the deciding factor." But owing to the war, removals and other causes the number dwindled considerably.

Electric light was installed in the Church in 1915, at a cost of £78. But the real pressure upon the finances was due not to such extras, maintenance or renovations, but to the burden of Church Extension. In November, 1915, the Board reported to the Session that the congregation was so heavily committed to Church Extension, that it could no longer afford the services of a Deaconess. Sister Elsie resigned in March 1916, (Miss Lilly rejoined the congregation in 1951, and was a member until her death in 1958).

In 1920-21, the Board felt that the development of the Linwood and Richmond charges was essentially a Home Mission work and could no longer be a charge on the St. Paul's General account, so a St. Paul's Home Mission Account was opened. In the same year the Assembly Budget Scheme was adopted. This meant that a larger amount would be required from the congregation. To raise it, the Board instituted a "special effort" consisting of a Collecting Campaign, a Sacrifice Sunday offering, a Concert and a Sale

of Work undertaken by the men—at which the ladies provided the supper! This brought in £155, the total amount being £600.

But the Budget was assessed upon the combined membership of St Paul's, Linwood and Richmond and the branches could make no contribution. Feeling that through the Budget and through its own extension work the congregation was paying twice over, the Board withdrew from the Scheme until it was free from financial liability for the Richmond branch.

Meanwhile the congregation had assumed a new responsibility. In 1920, two Bible Class members had entered Maori Mission work, Miss Ethel Kinross as Principal of Turakina College and Miss Edith Truman as an assistant teacher. Both taught at Turakina for 30 years, Miss Kinross receiving the M.B.E. in 1952. Now a third member of the same class was offering for foreign service. In 1921, a meeting of the combined Bible Classes recommended to the Annual Meeting of the congregation through the Session that Miss Jessie Hardie should be accepted as St Paul's Own Missionary. The suggestion was heartily accepted by the meeting. Miss Hardie was ordained in St Paul's on September 12, 1923, and left for India shortly afterwards. Another notable appointment from the same class in 1923, was that of Miss Rene Wilson as first Travelling Secretary of the Y.W.B.C. Union.

In May, 1924, the congregation celebrated its Diamond Jubilee with a fortnight of functions. The occasion was marked by the erection of a stone kerbing around the church grounds. On June 22, Mr Paterson, having received a call from St Paul's, Wanganui, preached his last sermon as minister of St Paul's.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE REV W. BOWER BLACK, LL.B.

The Rev W. Bower Black, LL.B., from Carterton, was inducted on November 24, 1924. With the formation of the New Brighton, Linwood and Richmond charges, the membership had decreased to 314. Mr Black's preaching was largely devotional. "It is a minister's task 'to call the people to come into God's presence with humble and adoring minds; to ask them to gaze with amazed eyes at Jesus; to show them a daily cause for astonished gratitude at the Cross of the Lord . . . Because our organisations and activities are so numerous we need to be increasingly watchful of the spirit which animates them.' It is so much easier to offer God a few activities than it is to offer him a life."

Mr Black's Presbytery and Assembly duties were not allowed to obtrude upon his duties as a minister. His public appearances seem to have been few. His time was given to study, to his devotional writings (one booklet "The Waters of Healing" being dedicated to the people of St Paul's) and to the work of the pastorate. When illnesses were long, his visits were regular and frequent. He seemed able to draw the sick and aged out of themselves, so that they spoke freely and it was then that his quiet manner



and quiet speech bore conviction that "in quietness and confidence shall be thy strength." He was greatly loved.

Mr Black was a lover of mountains and an admirer of Sir James Barrie. On many occasions he entertained the congregation with descriptions of his climbing holidays in the Southern Alps, illustrated with slides or with readings from "Auld Licht Idylls" or a "Window in Thrums."

He was a noted leader in the Bible Class Movement and so invaluable were his services that the Session gladly released him from his duties to attend camps and conferences. His booklet, "Our Badge," condensed and revised, is still used in Bible Classes.

At the Annual Meeting in 1925, Mr Black explained that more aggressive work should be undertaken among boys and youths in the city proper. An able young man who was willing to give half-time to this class of work in the neighbourhood of the church was available. The meeting approved of Mr Black's suggestions and subscriptions were offered to provide a salary of £100 p.a.; Mr Lunan Dewar was engaged and continued with some success for two years until he left to train for the ministry. The work then lapsed, no man with the necessary time being available.

In 1925, the Board bought a new coupé car and in 1926, when the house which Mr and Mrs Black were occupying was placed on the market for sale, it bought a manse, situated in Armagh Street, for £2050. It installed, also, a Homer heating system. Until 1916, when two gas heaters replaced kerosene ones, there is no record of any heating arrangements for the church. Earlier congregations were either stoical, indifferent to cold, more amply clothed or else a crowded church generated its own heat. The Homer was a hot air system and only partially successful. These were major items of expenditure and pressed fairly heavily upon the congregation.

This was a ministry of quiet, steady progress. In one year the number in the primary department was 90, the upper school being between fifty and sixty. Bible Class members numbered around 100. This, however, was a peak period. The Young Men's classes, in fact, never fully recovered from the effects of the war. The Band of Hope was still strong, forty members taking the pledge in one year.

In 1926, the mid-quarterly communion was discontinued, its place being taken by the evening Supplementary Communion on the same day as the morning Communion. In that year, the first service was broadcast from St Paul's. The Session was gratified to hear later that it was distinctly heard in the North Island! The following year, Mr Black introduced the Spring Festival Sunday. This has been continued to be one of the delightful days of the church year. In 1930, the Young Women's Missionary Club was formed for those young women who were unable to attend the women's organisations during the day. It began with 40 members, its aim being missionary study side by side with missionary activity.

In October, 1927, Mr George Burn died at the age of 64. He was a man much loved in the congregation, of earnest faith, simple trust and wide charity, with a quiet sense of fun, as shown when, presiding over a charitable meeting, he said "In order to give this meeting a definite religious

character, we will now take up a collection." He had been Sunday School Superintendent for 28 years, a member of Session for 29 years and Session Clerk for ten years until his death. A few weeks before he died the congregation, expressing its affection and esteem, presented him with a cheque for £100 in the hope that a long holiday with Mrs Burn would restore his health. This gift Mrs Burn left to St Paul's for general purposes on her death some years later.

In 1928 an Old Boys' Reunion was held to mark the retirement of Mr T. W. Reese from nearly 30 years' active leadership of the Senior Men's class. With Sir George Troup, he was regarded as the founder of the Bible Class Union, and a large gathering of past and present members united with enthusiasm to honour him. He was presented with a gold watch and made honorary Life Leader of the class.

In 1930, Mr Black was appointed Chaplain to St Andrew's College and thus began the "End of Term" services which have continued ever since. Called to St David's, Auckland, he severed his connection with St Paul's in November, 1931. The roll was 407.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE VERY REV ALAN C. WATSON, M.A., D.D.,

The Rev A. C. Watson, M.A., came to St Paul's from East Taieri and was inducted on April 28, 1932. He was the youngest minister to be called to St Paul's and it was his second charge. His years in St Paul's were strenuous, covering the depth of the depression and the first years of the second World War. A man of strong character, of great vigour and keen intellect he quickly made his mark on the business and academic community of Christchurch. He represented the Protestant Churches on Rotary and was elected President of Rotary for 1941-42 and on March 23, 1941, members of the Chamber of Commerce attended in large numbers, the first occasion on which this Association had attended a place of worship in its corporate capacity.

Mr Watson's conception of his work, however, was clear-cut. "My first duty is to preach and teach the Word of God. Many demands are made from many people and various organisations and a rigorous selection has been made. I have kept in mind the principle of going where I can fulfil my task as minister of the Word." He was an able and impressive preacher who sought to remember the needs of all sorts and conditions of men; but he believed that the first need of the time was direct religious instruction and much of his preaching was expository. As part of his teaching programme he began a Young Communicants' Class. This although primarily for young people was open to any who wanted fuller instruction in the meaning of church membership and the Christian life. This class in May was an annual fixture throughout his ministry.



From 1934 until he left in 1941 he also led the Senior and Intermediate Men's Bible Classes, using the Church of Scotland hand-books.

Another instrument to his hand was his monthly printed Newsletter which he began in 1935. Its purpose was mainly pastoral, a means of keeping in touch with a scattered congregation. But in addition to parish and national church items, an astonishing amount of information concerning Worship, Faith and Order, the Church in Europe, world figures such as Pastor Niemoller and current literature was passed on to his people over the years.

A third instrument was the book-rack at the church door. He personally selected the booklets and also recommended them from time to time. In one six months 220 booklets were taken. Mr Watson believed that there were two activities that a city congregation must not neglect—corporate prayer and corporate thought and study, and a fourth instrument was an Adult Education Class. This met for specialised study. One was held in 1936, another in 1938. Both sessions were related to the Conference of Life and Work at Oxford in July, 1937, when the subject was "Church, Community and State," and the Conference on Faith and Order at Edinburgh in August, 1937, and were linked to contemporary events in Europe and elsewhere. Mr Watson represented the General Assembly at these conferences which were attended by delegates from all the Christian Churches of the world, except the Church of Rome. The late Dr Alexander Miller, affectionately known then as the Rev Lex Miller, occupied the pulpit in his absence.

By the time Mr Watson arrived the congregation had swung into action on behalf of the unemployed. The year before the P.S.S.A. had opened a relief depot at St Peter's Church. Here the women of the congregation took their turn in serving out garments and groceries to the waiting queues of men and women. In the evenings the Bible Classes weighed up endless pounds of flour, sugar and oatmeal. Orphanages and missions were not neglected but the main energies of the women in particular were given to knitting, making and renovating garments for the depot, raising funds to buy materials and running numerous jam and grocery gift afternoons. They were assisted by the Missionary Club but this group worked mainly for the Nurse Maud Association. Every Christmas it gave a party for needy children, wooden toys for it being made by the Boys' Bible Classes. One Christmas, however, instead of holding the usual party, the money available was spent on electrical goods which were taken to selected cases of hardship. One woman, unwrapping an electric jug exclaimed in astonishment. "Why, its new!"—a commentary on the bitter situation of many people at this time. No record was kept of the garments and goods which went from St Paul's but the total effort was considerable.

In 1935, a common meeting-place for the youth of the congregation was provided by the formation of the St Paul's Tennis and Badminton Clubs. Tennis courts were rented at East Christchurch School and later at Canterbury College. The profits from each season's play were set aside towards a permanent site for the Tennis Club and in 1939, plans were well in hand, but were abandoned on the outbreak of war.

In 1935, also, a world figure, Dr Toyohiko Kagawa, with whom Mr

Watson had corresponded regularly, stayed at the manse for four days. The necessity for establishing friendly relations with the peoples of the Pacific zone had been stressed by Mr Watson. "Britain would always be Home, but the Pacific is the place where our national destiny will be determined." He had preached on "the Significance of Kagawa" and had made references to him from time to time. So it was an expectant congregation that listened on the morning of Sunday June 9, when Dr Kagawa preached to a packed church on "The Meaning of the Cross." This was one of the memorable occasions of Mr Watson's ministry. Mr Watson's book "Impressions of Kagawa" was reprinted in Japan.

When first New Brighton and then the Linwood and Richmond charges were formed, St Paul's geographical parish became much smaller. But it still kept a scattered membership. A letter written to the Session in 1932, shows how scattered this membership had always been. It was from John Tulloch, a venerable elder, who wrote asking to be relieved of his duties. "For 41 years, I have delivered communion cards and for twenty-five years have helped the session clerk to prepare for communion. At one time my district extended from Cashmere Hills to Sumner, including the Sanatorium, and the land between Moorhouse Avenue, Lower High Street, Ferry Road and Heathcote Valley. I've had to take a card to the Matron at the Lyttelton Gaol." (John Tulloch never owned a car). It was apparent even in 1935, that ultimately the church would be in the centre of a commercial and industrial area and that as the residential section declined so would the membership from within the parish. At the Annual Meeting that year, Mr Watson addressed the gathering on the "Future of St Paul's as a City Church," and suggested alterations to its buildings which would make it more suited to the purposes of a city like Christchurch. He raised the subject again in 1939, but the outbreak of war prevented any action being taken.

The nature of the membership of St Paul's affected the youth work quite considerably. Few children in those days had bicycles and the children of members and even office-bearers who were not within walking distance of the church tended more and more to go to the nearest Sunday School and later to its Bible Classes. The parents of comparatively few children in St Paul's School had any connection with the church. The fact that there was a Sunday School was due in part to the teachers who although for the most part living at a distance, managed to visit in the neighbourhood of the church. What was needed, said the Superintendent in one of his reports, was a Sunday School Agent. Similarly, in a girls' Junior-Intermediate Class of 30, two only came by tram from beyond the parish. The rest were within walking distance of the church; of these the parents of ten only were connected with St Paul's. The large membership was due entirely to the enthusiasm of members.

The Centenary of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand was now approaching and in 1938, the Centenary Thanksgiving Fund was launched. Its purpose was to raise the sum of £300,000—£175,000 was to be used for the congregational debt, the balance for the various schemes of the Church. Each congregation's debt (as declared in the Blue Book of 1936)





THE SESSION AND BOARD OF MANAGERS at the time of the Centennial Celebrations, April 17-20, 1964.



THE SESSION AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT at the time of the Jubilee Celebrations, April 19-26, 1914.

Front Row: Third from left is Mr S. C. Farr, Architect.  
 Front Row: Seventh from left is Mr John Tulloch (see Mr Watson's ministry).  
 Extreme right, Front Row: Mr E. MacRae (Session Clerk, 1911-13.)  
 Middle Row: Second from right is Rev James Tennent (St Paul's Missioner).





ST PAUL'S CHURCH IN 1964,  
without its tower, which was taken down in 1962.



THE INTERIOR OF ST PAUL'S, 1964.



was a first charge on the amount it raised. Our congregation raised £1700 in redemption of the mortgage of the Owen Trust, a legacy which had been invested in the original mortgage on the church in 1900.

The General Assembly met in St Paul's in November, 1939, to transact its ordinary business and then adjourned till February when it met in St Andrew's, Wellington, for its Centenary programme. During the celebrations in Christchurch, in March 1940, Mr Watson spoke to 4000 secondary school children.

The outbreak of war in September, 1939, brought to the congregation new duties, new anxieties and new strains. As a practical war effort the Badminton and Tennis Clubs raised funds to furnish the Young Men's Bible Class room as a lounge for the use of soldiers on week-end leave. Mr Watson became a member of the War Services' Council of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Committee of the Christchurch "Welcome Club," in each case representing the Presbyterian Church.

In 1941, the congregation of Toorak, Melbourne, which had had a Committee of Exploration making enquiries in Scotland, Australia and New Zealand, recognising his qualities of statesmanship and his ability as a preacher, called him to be a colleague and successor to Dr John Mackenzie. Mr Watson accepted the call and preached his farewell sermons on December 21, 1941. The roll was 478.

The Session and members of St Paul's heard with gratification that in 1954 the Rev A. C. Watson, M.A., received his Doctorate in Divinity and that in 1959, he was elected Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE VERY REV S. C. FRANCIS, B.A.

For the first three Sundays after Mr Watson's departure, the pulpit was occupied by Dr McMaster Kerr, a Canadian who was visiting New Zealand and Australia. A section of the congregation was greatly impressed by his personality and preaching, and wished to call him to be its minister. Other members, however, were opposed to a call and by the time a degree of unanimity was reached and a call signed, Dr Kerr had accepted the position of padre in the American army newly arrived in Australia. So when a call was extended to the Rev S. C. Francis, B.A. of Napier, the vacancy had lasted nearly eighteen months. Mr Francis accepted the call and was inducted on May 19, 1943.

It cannot be easy for a minister to go into a parish where there has been a period of disagreement. It says much for Mr Francis's natural warmth of character that harmony was gradually restored. He was greatly helped in having a family of growing girls and boys who spread amongst their contemporaries at school and in the congregation a warmth of fellowship and friendship not previously experienced in St Paul's. Mrs Francis, too, kept open house for young people and many students and

young immigrants found counsel and companionship in times of great loneliness.

The Church, as the family of God, was central in Mr Francis's preaching. For this reason the after-church social hour was now held weekly. Attendance varied but here, week by week, members and young people, visitors and tourists, and for shorter or longer periods "down and outs" have been welcomed, fed and entertained. In his pastoral work, also, it was as a "father in God" that Mr Francis ministered to his people. No man could hold little children more tenderly in the service of Baptism or serve more graciously in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at the service of Holy Communion.

A little more than a year after his induction, Mr Francis lost in effect his good right hand in the congregation. Mr Donald Burns, Session Clerk, who died on June 26, 1944. A member of the congregation for 50 years, he was made an elder in 1907, and succeeded his father-in-law, Mr Ebenezer MacRae, as Session Clerk in 1913. He resigned this office in 1916 when his work entailed much travelling. On the death of Mr George Burn, in 1927, he was again made Session Clerk. His sound judgment, unimpaired to the end, was modestly and freely put at the disposal of the congregation, the Presbytery and of the public bodies which he served. Of him it can be said as of Barnabas, that he was "a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and faith." He was succeeded by Mr S. E. McGregor, who fulfils his duties with care and faithfulness.

When Mr Watson left, the Senior Y.M.B.C., with military service imminent, went into recess. The leader of the Junior class enlisted, and with young women also eligible for civil and military service, there was no leader available for the Junior girls. These classes also went into recess. But there was a strong Senior Women's class of 17 members.

Late in 1943, a Junior Girls' class of six and a Young Men's class of five members, were formed. Within a year the men's class was big enough to divide into Junior and Senior classes. By 1945, the combined membership of all classes was 50.

The Sunday School, which with the Bible classes met at 10 a.m. grew more slowly. Only 40 in 1943, it was no more than 54 in 1946. In 1947, a transport system was begun whereby children were taken to and from Sunday School by members of the congregation. This was a sacrificial service, for petrol was rationed.

In the same year, a stimulus to the youth work was given by the appointment of Miss Daisy Dempsey of Auckland, as Congregational Visitor. Miss Dempsey systematically visited the Presbyterian homes in the parish and by her work and the transport system, the Sunday School roll grew to 159 in 1952.

The Bible Classes, Brigades, Life Boys and Cadets also increased in numbers, the combined rolls of the former being 75, and of the Brigades 90. The Boys' Brigade had begun in 1944 with four members, the Girls' Brigade in 1945 with 12 members, the Life Boys in 1948, with seven members and the Cadets in 1951 with ten members.

No member of the congregation was more delighted with the growing



recovery of the youth work than was "T.W." as he was affectionately called. Born in 1867, and baptised by the Rev George Grant, Mr Reese had been connected with St Paul's throughout its eight ministries. His father had built the first church. He was made an elder in 1907. A member of the firm of Reese Bros., Builders' Merchants, he was highly respected in business circles as a man of the highest integrity. A keen sportsman, he was the author of "New Zealand Cricket from 1841 to 1914." In every respect he fulfilled the motto of the Bible Class Union, "Be strong and show thyself a man." He died on April 13, 1949.

In the meantime, the women's organisations had been carrying on as usual; that is, with quiet energy and devotion. Much of their practical work was hindered by the rationing of clothing and materials. Nevertheless, by the sacrifice of coupons and such windfalls as occasional parcels of ends from manufacturing firms, they were able to supply clothing in some quantity to the P.S.S.A, Nurse Maude Association, Maori Missions and even to children evacuated from Glasgow. Much knitting and packing of parcels for men overseas was also done. When in 1946 the congregation adopted St George's Church, Regent Square, London, which Mr Francis had been connected with in his youth, the women packed annually, 8-9 cwt. of groceries in 7lb parcels. In 1951-52, this food was sent in bulk through the Aid for Britain Fund. And finally, there were the frequent fairs by which the Board of Managers augmented its never-sufficient income.

In 1948, in recognition of the valuable contribution women had made to its work, particularly in the raising of finance, the congregation at its Annual Meeting appointed Mrs J. E. Mackay and Miss Reta Martin to the Board of Managers. Women appointed on later occasions were the Misses E. Buchanan, P. Brunt, C. Miller, J. Laurenson, N. Walker and G. Witt.

Three new women's organisations were formed during these years—the Women's Study Group in 1945, the Women's Club in 1946, for women at work during the day and the "Young Marrieds" with their babies and toddlers in 1950. From the time it began the Women's Club has maintained a creche during the time of the morning service.

On April 2, 1950, the New Life Movement was inaugurated in St Paul's by a service of Dedication, but its real beginning was at Tyndale House, Cashmere, when a congregational retreat was held from April 14-16. The purpose of the retreat was "to prepare ourselves by prayer, worship, study and fellowship for our part in the New Life Movement." The immediate result was the formation of an Adult Fellowship which met twice monthly on Sunday afternoons. There were four study groups, ages ranging from 17 to 70. A second retreat was held in March, 1951, fifty being in residence and 70 attending the meetings. By an extension of time the congregational quota of £4200 was reached.

One Sunday, two strangers from overseas arrived in Christchurch. They asked at their hotel for the nearest Presbyterian church and were present at the morning service at St Paul's and the Adult Fellowship in the afternoon. They were Mr and Mrs F. Nauta, the first of the many Dutch whom

the congregation has been happy to receive into its membership, the Board of Managers and the Session.

In 1948, Miss Dempsey was ordained as Deaconess by the Presbytery of Christchurch, a signal honour to one who had given many years of service to the Church in general, and the youth of the Church in particular. In 1950, the General Assembly appointed her Principal of Deaconess College, Dunedin. Among her many endearing qualities was that of sanctified common-sense and the congregation parted with her regretfully when she left to take up her new position in February, 1951. Miss Marion Meldrum succeeded her as Congregational Visitor in May, 1951.

In November of the same year, Mr Arthur Lilly, A.R.C.O., resigned after 17½ years as organist and choir-master. He was an outstanding musician and an earnest Christian with the gift of geniality. His choir was always a happy family of singers.

Mr George Martin, Mus.Bac., S.T.C.L., L.R.S.M., was appointed successor to Mr Lilly. As well as being an outstanding organist and choir-master—the unaccompanied singing of the choir is often most moving—he also has the gift of geniality. This is noticeable at the after-church socials, where for many years he arranged the programmes. In 1955, he was ordained and inducted as a member of Session.

The notable event of 1951, however, was the retirement of Miss Jessie Hardie, St Paul's "Own Missionary." She had taken charge of the girls' educational work in October, 1924. In 1926, a beginning was made with a middle or secondary department in the Hindu School, a venture of faith for there were only three girls who would go on to the higher classes. The general attitude of parents was "what, is OUR daughter to work for a living? Never, never, never!" When however, these first pupils passed an examination almost the equivalent of school certificate, and one of them went on to a Mission High School, another to the Government Training College in Delhi, and the third, a Christian, became a teacher in the school, the people of Jagadhri were greatly impressed.

In 1933, the two Jagadhri schools, Hindu and Muslim, became one. There were no reactions among the parents and the girls mixed easily and naturally. By 1945, this school had outgrown the rented house which housed it, and it was decided to build a new one on the Mission Compound. The paint was still wet when the Deputy Commissioner for Ambala opened it in the presence of the Mission Council and a large gathering of townspeople. The loud-speaker did not come in time, but Miss Hardie was assured that her voice carried to the farthest corner of the grounds. The roll was 317.

In her 28 years, Miss Hardie had seen the Christian influence of the school slowly affecting public opinion in regard to such matters as the seclusion of women, caste and child marriage. This was helped by first hand observation of how the Christian community lived.

In the week before Miss Hardie left, Miss Gladys Riddle, a teacher and a member of St Paul's, arrived to take her place. Miss Riddle expanded the kindergarten department and made it pay! Towards the end of 1952, the domestic science room and Hardie Assembly Hall were opened. But



the outstanding event during her term was that the school, which twenty years earlier, had taught domestic science around the pump and over charcoal braziers was elected a pilot school in Nehru's plan of Basic Educational Training for Girls. This included agriculture as well as domestic science. Picking cotton, spinning and weaving were among the subjects taught. Miss Riddle is emphatic that without the excellently-trained staff Miss Hardie left, participation in the pilot scheme would have been impossible.

Miss Riddle returned in 1956, having achieved her purpose of bridging the gap between Miss Hardie's departure and the appointment of Mrs C. Lal as Indian Principal. So a chapter was closed in the history of St Paul's. It should be noted, perhaps, that of the original contributors to the St Paul's Own Missionary Fund, fourteen were still contributing in 1956.

The congregation's more intimate personal interest in the Missions of our Church is centred now in the Rev Wm. Francis who was ordained as a missionary to the New Hebrides in St Paul's in December, 1958. He has two daughters and two sons, and is Headmaster of the Onesua High School.

Miss Meldrum's term as Congregational Visitor was regrettably short. She resigned in November, 1952, on account of ill-health. Sister Iris Wilson, a trained Youth Worker, was appointed Deaconess from August 1, 1953. The Sunday School was now meeting at 11 a.m., the hall being over-crowded when School and Bible Classes met at 10 a.m. The transport of children had been stopped and the roll had dropped to 130. One result of meeting at 11 a.m. was that the Young Worshippers' League lapsed. This had been begun in 1917, the awards for regular church attendance being the Dr Elmslie's Memorial Prizes. The Busy Bees, formed in 1918, had also lapsed. The Sunday School now forms itself into a hive on Communion Sundays, when the Superintendent and a teacher conduct a missionary programme.

On April 24, 1955, the Memorial Plaque in honour of those members of the Church who had served in World War II, was unveiled and dedicated. The Plaque may be seen on the south wall at the east side of the Church.

For some months the congregation had been saddened by the illness of Sister Iris Wilson. Her active work practically ceased at the end of 1954. Like Mr Francis, she had emphasised the family relationship of the congregation and had been a familiar figure at the "Young Marrieds" and in the homes of the sick and aged. She was humble, kind, and above all else, courageous, with a strong Christian faith. She died on September 28, 1955.

In May, 1956, the congregation met to elect three women elders: Miss H. M. Arnold, Miss B. J. Hardie and Mrs J. E. Mackay. There was one dissident to the motion. As the arm of an elderly woman wavered, her deafish husband said loudly, "You're not going to vote for them, are you?" "I am," she replied firmly and up shot her arm. A moment later, up shot his arm against the motion. Miss Hardie had already been ordained an elder in the United Church of Northern India. Mrs Mackay and Miss Arnold were ordained, and all three were inducted on June 3, 1956. Since then, Sister Vivienne

Sinclair and the Misses E. V. Bachelor, P. Brunt and A. Burns have been admitted to the eldership.

Sister Vivienne Sinclair was appointed Deaconess from February 1, 1957. She is a most capable woman. Trained in office work, she is business-like. She preaches well. Her services are well-planned, well-prepared and well-conducted. She is practical—for example, visiting the aged living alone she will take a few vegetables or a small jar of jam, enough to provide a little welcome change or it might be a bundle of kindling. The congregation is fortunate in its Deaconess.

Six weeks later Mr and Mrs Francis left on a visit to Britain and Europe. In 1954, Mr Francis had been appointed Assembly Convener of P.S.S.A. and he planned to study Social Service Work abroad.

A few months after Mr and Mrs Francis's return, the Stewardship programme was launched; the full programme was faithfully followed—training, parish survey, (showing that there were 770 families, including communicants, with 1330 persons under pastoral care); congregational dinner and afterwards personal visitation to collect response cards. It is realised now, that the Stewardship programme was only partially successful, that it had needed boldness, initiative and imagination in adapting it to suit the peculiar conditions of an inner city congregation.

Mr Francis for many years had served in civic affairs as occasion demanded. Friendly, wise, and skilful, he had served the Courts of the Church with distinction. He had been Chairman of St Andrew's Board of Governors; Convener of the Youth Committee (now the Christian Education Committee); Convener of the Presbyterian Social Service Association, Chairman of the Christchurch Branch of the National Council of Churches. In 1960, the General Assembly honoured him—and the congregation—by electing him Moderator-Designate for 1962. He presided at this Assembly with dignity and ability. His Moderatorial tour with Mrs Francis included a visit to the New Hebrides Mission.

Nothing has been said concerning the Board of Managers. In 1945 it purchased a larger manse in Fitzgerald Avenue, but this proved to be out of the way for people wanting to consult Mr Francis. It then bought a section in Worcester Street, but the cost of building a new manse was too high and the present manse at 305 Worcester Street was secured.

In 1961, an architect, Mr D. Cowey, was engaged to make a detailed inspection of the church and buildings. His first report showed that in the church, matters needing attention were: Borer infected timbers, weather-proofing of the exterior and cleaning and redecorating of the interior. A more detailed inspection of the tower, after scaffolding had been erected for the weather-proofing, showed that it was in a dangerous condition, and that, in addition, that corner of the church was sinking slowly owing to weight imbalance, so that even if the tower were rebuilt, repairs would be necessary from time to time. At an emergency meeting of the Session and Board it was agreed to demolish the tower. Work began on it next morning, 150 tons of rubble being removed.

Renovations have also been carried out in the Sunday School and Bible



Class rooms and other improvements have been made also. The total amount spent so far has been £7000. Former members and the congregation responded generously to a "Save St Paul's Appeal" and legacies were also used. For new light fittings the congregation is largely indebted to Miss Hazel Elmslie (daughter of the late Dr Elmslie) who personally approached former members likely to be known only to herself.

The modernisation of the organ is one of the many things that have still to be faced. It was built by W. Hill and Son, Organ Builders, London, in 1905, and much of the interior construction is in solid mahogany. As is usual with an instrument of superior quality, both in workmanship and materials used, it has given outstanding, trouble-free service for nearly sixty years. Its organists have trained many, many pupils who are now serving churches throughout the country and all of these have had to practise on it daily. It is a tubular-pneumatic action three manual organ of some 1100 pipes, and it is hoped ultimately to bring it up-to-date by electrifying the action and bringing the console to the front of the choir.

Mr Francis resigned from St Paul's at the end of September 1963, to become Director of the Presbyterian Social Service Association of Southland. The Roll numbered 420.

## TO-DAY'S CHALLENGE—THE INNER CITY

Many who read this history will be disappointed to find little reference to people. But in reading closely the records of 100 years, it has been obvious that hundreds deserve honourable mention. And how does one discriminate between the members of the one body—between husband and wife, the faithful superintendent and the faithful teacher; the one who presides at the table and the one who stands over the sink after the meeting, the one with money and the one with time and skills, the one who maintains the essential services of the congregation and the one who works in the wider spheres of church and community?

These "varieties of service" are typified in the life of Jessie Elizabeth Mackay, who died on January 30, 1963. She joined St Paul's in 1910. She was a Bible Class leader, the only Secretary of the "Own Missionary Fund," President of the Ladies' Association for a period and a manager and elder.

She was Dominion Secretary and later President of the Y.W.B.C. Union. With Mr (later Sir James) Hay, she inaugurated the annual Children's Homes' Combined Appeal; she was a member of the Board of Rangi-ruru and of the local branch of the National Council of Churches.

She was a member of the North Canterbury Hospital Board for 27 years; a Life Member of the National Council of Women, the first Welfare Officer of the Canterbury branch of the Crippled Children's Society; a Justice of the Peace from 1943. For these and other public services she was awarded the M.B.E. in 1953.

The source and inspiration of her service and the service of those who preceded her, was a deep private devotional life and a strong religious faith, nurtured by unfailing attendance at public worship. All were "inspired by me and the same Spirit who apportions to each one as He will".

When the first church was opened in 1867 the Rev George Grant reminded his people, "It must not be forgotten that there is another Church to be erected, namely a spiritual one, of which the great builder is our Redeemer". Throughout 100 years St Paul's has been, not its building, but its people, bound by faith and commitment to their Lord. And now, at the beginning of a second century, we, the present members, are called to be pioneers—pioneers of the Inner City church.

For although surrounded by shops and offices, St Paul's has still its parish and there is a surprising amount of population in its area. But it is not all a stable population. Many are transients or waiting a chance to settle in new areas. There are older people, many living alone and in rooms. There are incomers of other racial groups, students, separated couples, new migrants, nurses, hostel dwellers and people with criminal records and on remand. In many cases these people know the full burden of human loneliness and the Church can help them. Here is St Paul's place of mission.

To bring the gospel of the love of Christ to the Inner City will be difficult but exciting! It will demand of us corporate prayer, thought and study, with imagination, initiative and boldness. But "the minister and congregation who have heard some mention of the God who brought victory out of the defeat of the Cross will have eyes to see that same God giving new life to them in the midst of their defeats . . . the God who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ sees the problems of the city church as opportunities for victory and new life. The question is not whether God **can** do anything in the city. The question is whether we will **allow** Him to do it through us. The God who specialises in great deliverances has one in store for the city church that will trust Him". ("The City—God's Gift to the Church", a Symposium.)



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